Perez backs Roco for 2004; Legarda is tickled pink

Story on PAGE A2

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Erap open to any job in 'unity gov't'

KAHIT SAAN, OK! SIBAKIN LANG NI GMA ANG LAHAT NG GRAFTERS SA GOBYERNO!!!

By Volt Contreras and Cynthia Balana

SPEAKER Jose de Venecia's "unity government" now has its first job applicant: deposed President Joseph Estrada. The

ERAP/ A13

Datumanong new justice secretary

SIMEON Datumanong becomes the first Muslim to head the Department of Justice after Hernando Perez resigned.
PDI PHOTO

Fernando denies he'll be DPWH chief

By Armand N. Nocum, Dona Pazzibugan and Leila B. Salaverria

THE CABINET revamp continues.

Pulling another surprise on her allies and critics, President Macapagal-Arroyo named Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong justice secretary on Friday, making him the first Muslim to head the Department of Justice.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye announced Datumanong's appointment in several radio interviews yesterday morning, starting at around 9 a.m.

Datumanong, 67, a former congressman of Maguindanao, had not been mentioned as among those being considered to replace Hernando Perez, who resigned Thursday as justice secretary due to allegations that he had extorted $2 million from Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez.

Datumanong's appointment came four days after Ms Macapagal stunned the nation by declaring that she would not run in the presidential election scheduled for 2004. In her Rizal Day speech, the President also announced that over the coming weeks "we will launch a series of powerful positive actions that will improve the life of our people," including more changes in the Cabinet.

Interviewed at the Veterans Golf Club in Quezon City, Datumanong said he was hesitant to take the job that would get him to oversee the resolution of cases involving his predecessor.

"We cannot do anything but to accept whatever is the will of the President," he told the INQUIRER before teeing off.

Datumanong said the President called him up the night Perez personally handed to Ms Macapagal his resignation letter on Jan. 2.

At the time, Datumanong told the Presi-

DATUMANONG/ A13

SMILING VISITOR. A visibly relaxed President Macapagal-Arroyo salutes honor guards upon her arrival at the Mactan International Airport in Lapu-Lapu City on Saturday. The President stayed overnight in Cebu City after attending a wedding of the son of former Cebu City Mayor Alvin Garcia.
PCPO-MALACAÑANG PHOTO

IMAGINING THE REPUBLIC

A strong state is key to economic growth

By Rigoberto Tiglao
Presidential spokesperson and chief of staff

(Last of two parts)

ESSAY

ALL over the world, accounts of a people in arms against foreign invaders are the stuff for imagining a national community. But the US conquerors banned such accounts of those "bandits." Not too many of us know heroes like Vicente Lukban, Miguel Malvar, Mariano Trias who led against-all-odds resistance against American occupation.

The late historian Renato Constantino popularized such an analysis through the term "miseducation of the Filipino," the title of his book on the phenomenon. It was worse than a "miseducation" though.

An entire 300 years of existence of a people, of historical memory was practically deleted. As the scholar Benedict Anderson put it, a "virtual lobotomy had been performed."

Not only a lobotomy on the brain of the Filipino nation, perhaps. Transplanted was a brand new world view: an individualistic, materialistic world view as if nation-states didn't matter. After all, the quality of life in the archipelago, at least for its elite, improved vastly under the American colonial state that certainly was not the embodiment of the nation.

A STRONG/ A13

They wanted only to live; Inquirer told their stories

By Christian V. Esguerra

"WHOEVER you are, wherever you are, thank you very much. Your help has gone a long, long way."

With this expression of deep gratitude, at least 21 indigent sick persons who had come to the Philippine Daily Inquirer for assistance in 2002 wished to return the love to the many faceless Good Samaritans.

They wanted only to live, and the INQUIRER told their stories.

Close to P600,000 has been raised so far, parts of which went directly to individual beneficiaries. By no means does this guarantee any patient's full recovery. They need much more, maybe millions. But the lift of hope, knowing that it is possible for strangers to care so much, keeps the light aglow for people like Sionita de la Cruz.

"I had given up, but they—I wish I knew their names—gave me back the will to live," the 25-year-old kidney patient told the INQUIRER.

THEY/ A4

LIGHTING HOMES AND HEARTS

Sun lights up Tawi-Tawi homes for ₱50 a month

By Jerry Bisson and Rodrigo Cabrera
Contributors

IN THIS day and age, residents of some 3,000 barangays in Muslim Mindanao still have no electric lights in their homes. Their distance from the national power grid has made it difficult and costly to supply them with electricity.

Nights have become bright, however, in some far-flung villages of Mindanao.

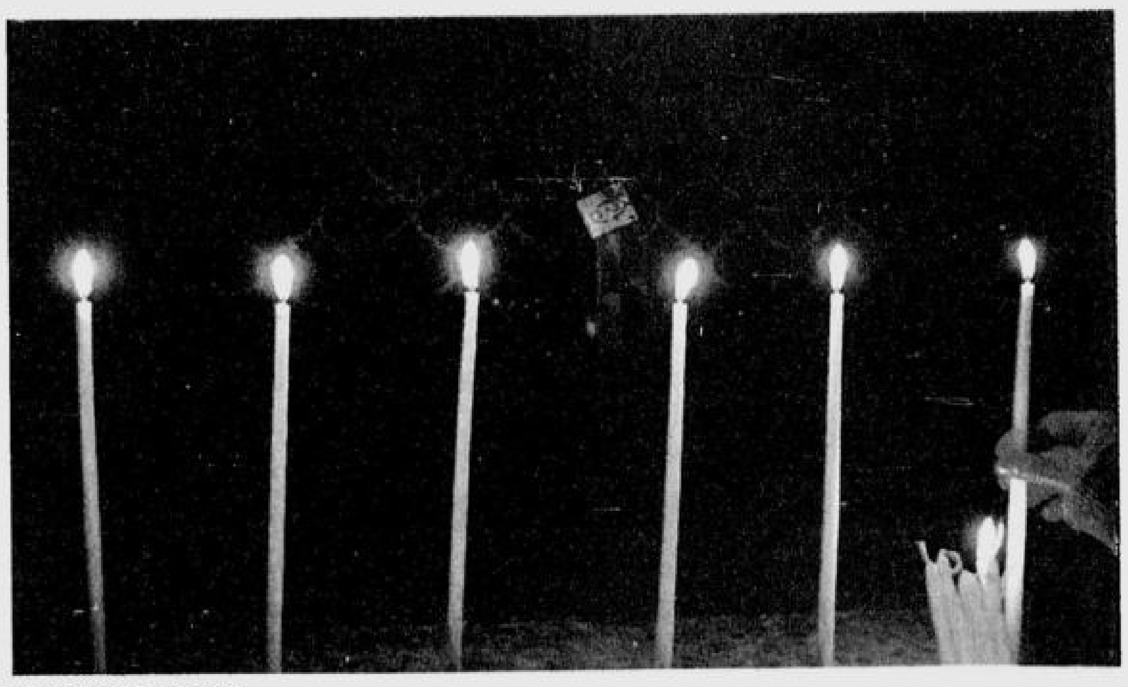
On Pababag Island, for example, residents had long envied the people of Bongao town, Tawi-Tawi's capital, who had been enjoying 24-hour electricity supplied by a 10-megawatt power barge. Pababag is just seven minutes by boat from Bongao.

But envy gave way to euphoria for residents of 10 barangays in Tawi-Tawi, including four in Pababag, when the Alliance for Mindanao Off-Grid Renewable Energy (Amore) program provided them with solar energy.

Take the case of Al Sharift Ladjahali, former barangay chair of Lagasan, who was ecstatic when two solar-powered fluorescent bulbs lit up his house in July 2002.

His seven children usually stayed home as dusk fell "because they were afraid of ghosts." Now

SUN/ A13



LIGHTS OF HOPE
A FILIPINO pilgrim lights six candles at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, one of the holiest sites for Christians around the world, in Jerusalem on Wednesday. Hundreds of Christians spent the first day of the year praying inside the church.
REUTERS

Wives, moms, sis cry, laugh, fight for jailed kin in UAE

By Leila B. Salaverria

CALL it female bonding.

The wives, mothers and sisters of 23 Filipino seamen detained in the United Arab Emirates have developed a common bond, finding strength in each other in their quest to bring the jailed men home. Their friendship, honed in their weakest moments, sees them through their adversity.

The 23 women first met in a McDonald's restaurant in Baclaran, Parañaque, in February 2000, a few weeks after 30 Filipino seamen were jailed in Abu Dhabi for allegedly defrauding several banks there. Seven seamen have since been released.

Malou Tejero, 37, had called that meeting to discuss their loved ones' plight. Tejero got in touch with the women through the seamen's recruitment agency.

It was an eventful meeting, marked by the flowing of many tears.

"We were a bit hesitant to talk at first," said Tejero. "But soon we shared stories, and then cried a lot even as we ate."

Fatima Agustin, 37, paid for their meal, using the last $100 she had received from her husband.

Then and there, the women decided to seek justice for the jailed men. They appointed Agustin, a feisty Muslim, as their leader and spokesperson. For a year after that meeting, they saw each other almost every day—rain or shine—trooping to various government agencies and appealing to numerous officials, including Vice President Teofisto Guingona and National Labor Relations Commission chief Roy Señeres,

WIVES/ A4

Second FRONT PAGE

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The Eastern section of the country will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: ARMIN ADINA, PDI RESEARCH/01/05/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

MILF not keen on unity gov't

DAVAO CITY—The Moro Islamic Liberation Front said it was only trying to be diplomatic when it asked that the government formalize the invitation for it to participate in the so-called unity government.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said what the MILF was really interested in was how the administration proposes to come up with solution to the decades-old problem of the Muslims in the south and not the political crisis faced by the Macapagal administration.

"Well, we are interested in working with the government in solving the Mindanao problem but that does not mean we would be interested to send some of our people or chairman Salamat Hashim to the Cabinet," Kabalu said.

He said that President Macapagal-Arroyo was right in saying that the unity government should focus on platforms rather than on personalities Speaker Jose de Venecia is proposing.

"I don't think that personalities would help the President in her task," Kabalu said.

He said the MILF could help in other ways than becoming part of the government. *Allan A. Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Perez supports Roco; Loren is tickled pink

By Norman Bordadora

RAUL Roco may not know it, nor might he like it, but he has an ardent supporter in resigned Justice Secretary Hernando Perez.

Perez was forced to resign his post recently in the wake of unproven allegations he took a $2-million bribe from extradited Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez. Roco was forced to quit as education secretary last year after his popularity with voters was perceived as a threat to the election of President Macapagal-Arroyo in 2004.

But now that the President has announced that she is not standing for election, Perez said he is including Roco's name in the list of administration candidates for President in 2004.

Though he may be out of the Cabinet, Perez retains some influence as secretary general of the ruling party, the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats.

"I will continue as secretary general of Lakas-CMD and as such help in the selection of whoever will be our presidential candidate," Perez said in his farewell news conference at the Department of Justice on Friday.

He said Roco's name was not being mentioned as prominently as the other politicians' who are suddenly in the limelight after Ms Macapagal took herself out of the running.

"There are many candidates being considered, including former President Fidel Ramos, Senators Juan Flavier, Loren Legarda, Robert Barbers and Noli de Castro. I venture to add one more—(former) Sen. Raul Roco," Perez said.

He said Roco served President Macapagal faithfully during his stint as education secretary, until Presidential Anti-Graft Commission chair Dario Rama revealed to the media that the President was having Roco investigated for graft.

"The only irritant that made him resign was Mr. Rama," Perez said.

Like Perez, the charges against Roco were not proven. But unlike Perez, the charges against Roco were not as serious—that he had used department funds to order calendars of himself and had allowed his wife to use his official driver—practices that are standard with other government officials.

To observers, Roco's real crime was having his name shoot up in the popularity polls as the top choice for President should elections be held today. It was Roco's popularity that was perceived to be the real reason behind his sacking at the education department.

The former justice secretary vouched for the former education secretary, saying he has known Roco since their younger days.

"I have known him for a long time and he is qualified. We always came upon each other when we were younger and we learned to respect each other," Perez said.

In Lingayen, Pangasinan, Sen. Loren Legarda said Saturday "there's no time to daydream," as she dispelled conjectures she would be running for President in 2004.

Legarda, who visited several Pangasinan towns to inaugurate her projects, admitted, however, that she was thrilled by the support she was getting from Lakas officials and the people.

Arriving in Lingayen, she was greeted by residents carrying placards that read "Loren Legarda for President" and "Loren for 2004."

"I must admit that I'm tickled because the (people) seem to be sincere," but she added it was too soon to think about the 2004 elections.

"I think I will assess the situation first. I have not entertained the thought, there's so much work. As you can see, there's no idle time, no time to daydream. I have not thought about it," she told reporters.

Legarda inaugurated projects in Dagupan and Alaminos cities and Binmaley and Manaoag towns. She stopped briefly for lunch at the house of Lingayen Mayor Josefina Castañeda where she met with reporters.

Legarda said the warm receptions and the urgings of fellow politicians were not enough to make her decide to pursue the presidency.

"Politicians ask, urge, propose. It would take much more than such endorsements. But I think it is too soon, I will assess the situation first and consult different sectors," she said.

ROCO

Legarda also said she was open to debating changes in the Constitution and the issue of shifting to a parliamentary form of government.

"But this time, (the issue) is divisive. It's not yet time (to shift)," she said.

She said the issue might give the people false hopes that changing the form of government would be "a panacea or cure-all."

"Besides, the people are used to electing their officials directly. Let us not take that privilege away from them," she said. *With Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Sulu fighting resumes

ZAMBOANGA CITY—After a lull of several days, clashes between government troops and gunmen of the Abu Sayyaf kidnap group have resumed in Sulu.

One bandit was killed and about 11 soldiers wounded in an hour-long gun battle in barangays Laba and Bolabo in Maimbung town on Friday afternoon, Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Narciso Abaya said yesterday.

He said a newly formed unit, the 35th Infantry Battalion, had been sent on patrol at the two barangays when they encountered 50 armed men.

One of the wounded soldiers, Cpl. Arthur Arienda, remains in serious condition. The wounded soldiers have been airlifted to the Camp Navarro Hospital here.

In another clash, five soldiers, including a brigade commander, were wounded in an ambush in South Cotabato yesterday by unidentified gunmen, a military report said.

Lt. Col. Eduardo Andres and four of his men were wounded when 50 armed men ambushed his group in Tupi town, the report said, adding that the officer was in serious condition.

The attackers are suspected communist guerrillas or Moro separatist rebels.

Gloria to work on jobs, homes, food, education

HOUSING, jobs, education and food production will take up most of President Macapagal-Arroyo's attention in her remaining 18 months in office now that she is a declared non-candidate in the 2004 elections.

In a speech Saturday opening the New Year, the President said her recent decision not to seek another term has freed her from political pressures and would allow her to carry out her duties.

She reiterated her priorities as "jobs, homes, education, food on every table," citing a plan to build 500,000 homes during her term.

She also expressed the hope the country would not let political conflicts get in the way of development.

"We must put aside politics and personal interests so we can join and help one another for the benefit of the many," Ms Macapagal said in the address, which was carried on government television and radio.

The President said she had boosted revenue collections in an attempt to control the growing budget deficit, which has been identified as the key problem facing the country.

As part of this effort, the government would work to develop the Mt. Diwalwal mining site in the southern Philippines, where as much as $18 billion in gold may be tapped, Ms Macapagal said.

She also said she would work to heal the divisions in society and strive to make the 2004 elections clean and honest, now that she had abandoned plans of running.

She remarked that despite the problems facing the country, the Philippines continued to post impressive economic growth and the peace and order situation improved during her term.

The President stunned the country on Dec. 30 when she announced that she was not running for the presidency in 2004 to free herself to concentrate on instituting reforms in her remaining 18 months in office.

The day before the President's speech, Senate President Franklin Drilon suggested that the proposed Department of Housing and Urban Development be strengthened by giving it "supervision and control over the various housing agencies... of the government."

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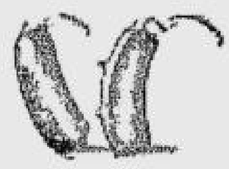

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Computers to aid search for missing Dutchmen

KLAAS Bisschop

JACCO Wilderom

MARCEL Wilderom

By Alex Paul
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—With no solid clues indicating where to begin a search, friends of three missing Dutch tourists are hoping to simulate the ocean currents with the help of computers to determine where their boat could have drifted.

In Zamboanga City, the Southern Command said it was calling off its search in Mindanao waters for the three men—Marcel Wilderom, 33, his younger brother Jacco, 31, and Klaas Bisschop, 48—who went missing off the coast of Siquijor island in the central Visayas while sailing toward the Apo island marine sanctuary to do some fishing.

Bart Koeman, a childhood friend of the younger Wilderom brother, said he and some friends would e-mail photos of Philippine ocean currents to their friends in Holland who will put all the data in a computer.

Chinook data

The Dutch will rely mainly on the data from the US search and recovery operation for the Chinook helicopter which crashed on Feb. 22 last year, killing all 10 passengers and crew.

The site of the Chinook crash some six miles south of Apo island is believed to be near the area where the Dutch tourists, along with their two Filipino boatmen, Alejandro Maningo and Leoncio Capistrano, were lost.

The tourists and boatmen were last seen in Siquijor on Dec. 18 leaving San Juan town on their way to Apo island.

Data from the US search operation have been retrieved through a photograph of the map used during the search. The photograph, obtained from the files of this reporter, plotted the location of the crash and the direction of the floating debris.

The map indicated that the floating debris of the Chinook helicopter drifted as far as 50 km in 11 hours and 10 minutes. Twenty-eight hours after the crash, some debris were spotted about 150 km away from the impact point in the general direction of southern Palawan and Sabah, Malaysia.

Another current was heading in the direction of Sulu, but no debris from the crashed chopper was found on the shore.

"This information is very valuable. We are also trying to locate institutions in the Philippines which could also provide additional data on sea currents here so we could find out how precisely we can look," he said.

Reward

Koeman, who has been in Dumaguete City with his wife Ineki for almost two weeks now, was joined last Friday by Jacob and Roalof Bisschop, brothers of Klaas.

They have announced a P50,000-reward to anyone who could provide information that could lead to the recovery of the missing tourists. The reward money may be claimed at the Dutch Embassy which can be reached at telephone 02-8125981 or through its e-mail address at man@minbuza.ni.

The search for the foreigners in Mindanao began on Dec. 28, nine days after they disappeared, on the supposition that the foreigners' boat may have been simply blown off course by strong winds and steered in the direction of Mindanao.

"Unfortunately, there was no indication of the missing banca," said Southcom chief Narciso Abaya, explaining why the search was called off.

But the friends of the three missing men urged the authorities to continue with the search.

"It has been over two weeks now yet we do not know what happened to them," said Ineketen Hertog, a friend of the Wilderons.

Hertog also urged authorities to try searching in the Sea of Sulu or in the seas off Zamboanga del Norte.

"The current around Siquijor then was very strong going southwest and they might have been brought in the direction of Zamboanga del Norte or maybe the Sulu Sea," she suggested. *With a report from Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Guingona wants special treatment for RP in WTO

VICE President Teofisto Guingona has asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to start working for "special and differential treatment" from the World Trade Organization as the country's so-called safety nets for domestic agriculture and industry would not be enough to blunt the ostensibly harmful effects of free trade.

Guingona said it was essential that the measures are adopted now as the "adverse" effects of the country's commitments to the WTO and the Asean Free Trade Agreement would be felt in the next three to four months.

"(I ask the President to) support our agriculture and industries through a comprehensive review of our commitments under the Afta and the WTO," Guingona said even as he expressed confidence that his suggestions would be followed in the wake of the President's newfound resolve to eschew politicking and focus on strengthening the economy.

He said the leadership has to prepare the nation to become competitive in the face of Afta and the WTO.

And since the WTO itself allows special consideration for developing economies, "we should work for special and differential treatment based on a strong and united stand," he said.

Guingona said poor farmers and fisherfolk, especially those living in the rural areas, would be greatly affected when imported cheap agricultural produce come in from the developed countries that are subsidizing their own agricultural sectors. *Norman Bordadora*

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Nene: Just a gimmick of 'a mega-politician'

By Juliet Javellana and Alcuin Papa

SPEAKER Jose de Venecia defended his "all-embracing" unity government proposal yesterday, saying any talk about unity was useless without a national structure to bring it about. But members of the opposition and militant groups ripped the proposal apart.

In yesterday's forum at the Sulo Hotel, opposition leader Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the proposal was the "knee-jerk reaction of a mega-politician."

"*Pakulo lang yan* (That's just a gimmick). How do you get ideologues like Joma Sison and Salamat Hashim to just throw away their arms and jump into the bandwagon without defining what they would be joining? What are the platforms and programs involved? It won't work," Pimentel said.

The administration will have to "define the terms" of the so-called government of national unity, he added. But he also said the opposition in the Senate would study the proposal very carefully "to make sure it would not deprive the opposition of its role."

Former Sen. Francisco Tatad said the proposal "makes for very good headlines. But I don't know the basis for this."

Medardo Roda of the militant transport group Piston cast doubt on the proposal.

"How can there be unity if the programs the government are implementing are anti-poor? They should include the poor in that government of national unity," Roda told reporters at the Cypress forum, also in Quezon City.

Sonny Malunes, spokesperson of the Kilusan May Uno, said any unity government should include workers and farmers.

"If they really want to forge a government of national unity, they should grant the P125 across the board wage increase," Malunes said.

Positive Joe

But De Venecia remained unfazed.

"I am thankful that the Cabinet approves it (the proposal) in principle and the response from all political parties and different groups is very positive. We should move rapidly to maintain the momentum and not lose the initiative."

He said there was a need for "specific and concrete proposals" on how to achieve the unity government, adding that the concept was just beginning to evolve.

"Talk is cheap. Without a vehicle for national unity, all these calls for unity will be motherhood statements, all fury and sound signifying nothing," De Venecia said.

De Venecia said another summit of all political parties and civil society would be held third week of this month to discuss the formation of the unity government.

He also said he had always advocated program-oriented government structure.

"It has to be program-oriented but we have to sound off now who from their respective groups will help us in these programs," he said.

De Venecia called on his partymates in Lakas-CMD (Christian Muslim Democrats) and other sectors to refrain from discussing 2004.

"There should be a moratorium on presidential politics, otherwise the personal sacrifice of the President will go to naught," he said.

Apolitical Gloria

In her first radio address of the year, President Macapagal-Arroyo called for an end to the "political rift" that marked her first two years in office.

She said she had dropped out of the 2004 presidential race to end the "endless politicking" that has hampered the country's progress.

"I hope with the exit of the old year goes the hatred and pains in our hearts," she said.

"Hopefully, the New Year will be filled with love, forgiveness and understanding of our fellowmen," she added.

"I want an end to the political rift that is one of the reasons for the poverty in our country," Ms Macapagal said. "Endless politicking has hampered our country from attaining progress.

Hopeful Ed

Opposition leader Sen. Edgardo Angara welcomed the President's decision not to run, saying it had effectively killed the no-elections scenario and vested the discussions on constitutional change with a non-partisan color.

Angara is the president of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino and chair of the Senate committee on constitutional amendments, revision of codes and laws and electoral reforms.

"No hidden, selfish and partisan agenda should color the charter change discussions," he said.

Angara said both Houses of Congress have agreed to form a joint committee to hold public hearings on charter change.

He said that at this point, there was no clear public pulse on constitutional change.

Unsteady Eddie

Pimentel said the efforts of some leaders of the ruling Lakas party to push ex-President Fidel Ramos to run again may spell disaster.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday described Ramos as a "problem candidate" who left behind a legacy of anomalous government transactions.

If Ramos is drafted as the Lakas standard bearer anew, he would be hounded by criticisms over his role in the imposition of the much-despised Power Purchase Adjustment (PPA), Pimentel said.

Pimentel said Ramos was also involved in the Centennial Expo scam which had defrauded the government of billions of pesos in taxpayers money. *With reports from Cynthia Balana and Dona Pazzibugan*

Wives, moms, sis cry, laugh, fight for jailed kin in UAE

From page A1

for help.

They braved storms and knee-deep floods, and battled hunger and exhaustion.

Being housewives with no steady source of income, the women had to pool their resources for their transportation and food. When someone was cash-strapped, those with a little extra money provided the needed amount.

"There was a time when all we had for lunch was banana cue because we did not have much money," Agustin said.

Sharing secrets

The women's closeness is evident.

During conversations, they finish each other's sentences. They hug and kiss and put their arms around one another. They fondly call each other *mare*, a Filipino word that refers to a close female friend.

The women know the details of each other's lives, trusting one another with secrets they do not, or cannot, tell their husbands.

They openly talk about their problems, serving as "therapists" to one another.

"We've heard every imaginable problem—from lack of money to pay for the rent and electricity, water and hospital bills, to feelings of despair and hopelessness," said Annie Lyn Ramirez, 38, and Luzviminda Diaz, 43.

They regularly keep in touch by calling and sending text messages to one another. They share with each other letters from their husbands and their telephone conversations with them.

Sharing laughter, too

But the women's friendship is not all about tears.

They share laughter, too, telling jokes and teasing each other about the supposed female friends who visit their husbands in jail.

"Sometimes, when all of us are crying, one would make a funny remark and our tears would stop. That keeps us sane," said Ramirez.

They also try to amuse themselves while earning a living.

Tejero, for instance, busies herself with her passion—singing—while trying to eke out a living. She operates a small videoke machine where aspiring singers pay a minimal amount to belt out a song. While waiting for clients, Tejero sings her favorite pop tunes.

"That attracts customers," she said.

After their meetings, the women attend Mass at the Baclaran Church while Agustin patiently waits outside.

Always united

The women say they never had any major quarrel throughout their friendship. There had been minor arguments leading to a few ruffled feathers, but these were all resolved quickly.

After all, with a mammoth task facing them, they cannot afford to be divided.

Agustin said all the 23 seamen have already been cleared of the crime they were accused of. The guilty party, an Indian national named Stanley Pereira, had confessed in a letter to Abu Dhabi authorities to padding the men's loans and appropriating the extra amount for himself.

Despite Pereira's statement, the 23 seamen continue to languish in prison because the banks wouldn't let them go unless the loans are repaid, Agustin said.

Last Nov. 25, the women went to Malacañang seeking the help of the Office of the President in helping their loved ones be set free and sent home.

The women said they are determined to get the men out of Abu Dhabi. They plan to hold a grand reunion with all the men and their families in attendance.

The 23 seamen still in jail are Nestor Agustin, Jose Diaz, Samuel Ramirez, Renato Tejero, Edward Reyes, Leonardo Zapata, Alvin John Tayao, Johnny Villasoto, Ildefonso Amul, Frederick Caramoan, Antonio Hafalla, Rufino Sawali, Albert Dagsa, Nicasio Dagsa, Ronnie Valdez, Joel Sumalde, Paulito Gimena, Marianito Gimena, Mario Algodon, Rogelio Gariando, Marcelino Silan, Fred Vertudez, Danilo Padilla.

OFW Family Club

WIVES of detained seamen seek help from former Ambassador Roy Señeres.

JM GUIAO PUNZALAN

They wanted only to live …

From page A1

Sionita could barely walk or breathe when her husband Eric brought her to the PDI office early last year. They had come all the way from Santiago City in Isabela, at least 10 hours away. Only five months earlier, she had contracted a simple urinary tract infection. Limited resources precluded immediate medical attention, and now her kidney had failed altogether.

Eric was a tricycle driver. Sionita was a vendor of dried fish in the local market, until she could no longer work. They lived in a small house that they shared with 16 other people. Her treatment consumed all their money and "valuables."

At the time of their visit, the couple had to raise P6,000 weekly for Sionita's dialysis at the Philippine Kidney Dialysis Foundation in Manila. This in itself was a predicament. They dared not even think of the P370,000 they would need for her kidney transplant.

Sionita's story saw print in May. Eric said text messages offering prayers and encouragement flooded a relative's mobile phone whose number appeared in the article. They received a total of P346,000, aside from a wealthy donor's pledge that he would shoulder all expenses for the transplant, as soon as a suitable kidney is found.

"The (cash) has all been spent on medicine," Eric said, "and we still try to make ends meet everyday. But we're really thankful to those people who gave my wife a second chance."

Staying optimistic

Like Sionita, 17-year-old Ernesto Miranda Jr. has long suffered from renal distress. He was an engineering freshman at the Rizal College in Morong when both of his kidneys failed. He has since been confined at home.

His father works in a Mandaluyong printing factory but no longer collects any pay, because what he makes is not even enough to offset salary advances and other loans. His older sister, a bank employee, earns a minimum wage. His mother Amelia is jobless, and spends whole days seeking help from government and charity institutions.

It was a desperate situation for the teenager, until he received about P180,000 from donors who read his story in March. The amount paid for a "cross-match" of his kidney with that of his sister, in preparation for a transplant. Unfortunately, the kidneys didn't match. A second cross-match, with his mother as possible donor, would require another P180,000.

Meanwhile, on top of oral medication, Ernesto needs P20,000 daily for dialysis—and P500,000 for the transplant.

"We have a long way to go," Amelia said. "But we have been very much encouraged by the first outpouring from people we had never met. My son was extremely happy. I believe the goodwill had as much to do with it as the physical relief that the money helped us give him."

And since she didn't think goodwill ever really ran out, Amelia added, "we are staying optimistic."

Twin hearts

In Pasil, a barrio in Kalinga, Apayao, about seven hours away from the provincial capital, residents are excited about a surgery that would separate Siamese twins Leah Grace and Rachel Sunset Lawel.

Because of the complexity of the procedure, Gov. Macario Duguiang said, quoting doctors, the operation would not take place until July when the twins turned one year old.

The pediatrician, Dr. Marlene Duya, said Leah and Rachel had a good chance at survival because they had individual hearts and vital organs that were functioning properly.

Surgery was an impossible dream for the little girls until their story was published shortly after their birth. They were the first children of Marietta Banatao and Andy Lawel, a bean-and-coffee farmer earning P50. That's "on a lucky day," according to the governor.

The INQUIRER feature sent arrows straight to the heart of modern-day magis. The twins have since been placed under the care of the provincial social welfare office. In preparation for the July surgery, they also undergo regular checkup at the provincial hospital and the Philippine Children's Medical Center in Quezon City.

Creating fortunes

Sionita, Ernesto, and the twins are but a few of countless Filipinos who fight daily battles with painful and debilitating ailments while struggling against poverty. Two more recently visited the PDI.

Myracel Manuel, 24, also needs a kidney transplant. But she has no mother like Amelia, or husband like Eric, to knock on doors for even just temporary respite from the pain. Six years ago, her mother died of leukemia. Recently, her diabetic father's leg was amputated.

For 9-year-old Ronel Dablo's small body, monthly chemotherapy maybe too much. But he needs more and more of it as the menacing cancer advances. Sure, he's still got his parents, but they're running out of options. They recently sold their house in Cebu, for P7,000—exactly half the cost of a single chemotherapy session.

There will always be tales of tribulation. The good news is—as the Inquirer's experience last year proved—there will always be people who, at the right time and waking to the right intention, will know in their hearts that the way to make their own true and lasting fortune is to give a piece of it away.

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Jan 11-13 How to Start and Manage a Pre-school (*with field trip*)
Jan 13 Setting up a Travel Agency
Jan. 13-14 How to Start and Manage Janitorial Services
Jan 14-15 Entrepreneurial Marketing
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Jan 16-17 Corsage and Bouquet Making
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Jan 16-18 Coconut Mini-Oil Milling and Refining (*with field trip*) (*in cooperation with ITDI/DOST*)
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Jan 18-19 Herbal Bath Soap (*in cooperation with ITDI/DOST*)
Jan 18-20 Operating a Laundry Shop Business (Small-Scale) (*with field trip*)
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Jan 23-24 Reflexology
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Jan 25-26 Jewelry Appraisal and Pawnshop Operation
Jan. 25-26 Laundry Soap and Detergents (*in cooperation with ITDI/DOST*)
Jan. 25-27 Fresh Flower Arrangement and Flower Shop Operation and Management (*with field trip*)

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NPA assailed on 'child warriors'

LUCENA CITY—The military's Southern Luzon Command based here assailed the alleged recruitment and utilization of "child soldiers" by the communist New People's Army guerrillas, particularly in the Bicol region, calling the practice "the most vicious manifestation" of the rebel group's human rights violations.

Maj. Gen. Roy Kyamko, the Solcom commander, said that based on most of the testimonies of NPA rebel returnees, "the terrorists have been conducting massive recruitment of minors aged 13 to 17 from the ranks of urban students and out-of-school peasants."

"The NPA uses the children as warriors in the pursuit of its terroristic activities. It convinces young and naive students in the urban areas and those living in far-flung barangay to join the movement in exchange for guns and cash," Kyamko said in a statement.

He said the terrorists teach these young minds "the godless and deceptive doctrine of communism, how to kill and at the same time, whet their energy with a false sense of worthy adventure."

"Most of the time, the kids are just doing it for the sake of fun and excitement without knowing that they are being exploited," the general said.

Contacted by the INQUIRER, the Communist Party spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal vehemently denied the accusation.

"The military is again peddling lies. What we follow is a strong and clear-cut policy that prohibits any NPA unit to recruit combatants that are below 18 years old," Rosal said in a cellular phone interview.

And if there should be cases in which minors desire to get involved in the revolutionary movement, "they are not given guns and are not assigned tasks that directly involve combat operations."

"Most of them perform menial assignments, running errands, courier jobs and the likes," he said.

Solcom spokesperson Maj. Jose Broso said that in the provinces of Albay, Sorsogon and Camarines Norte, "red-painted revolutionary graffiti and vandalism are prominently splashed at every vacant wall."

"Based on the report, young city students apparently on test missions from their recruiters are the ones conducting the *'oplan-dikit',*" Broso said.

He said parents, school authorities and local officials should monitor the extra-curricular activities of the community's youthful members.

"Detection of a person who is undergoing communist indoctrination is easy. Just like initial drug users, the person also undergoes noticeable transformation in attitude and reasoning," Broso said.

He added that the military has already rescued several minors from the revolutionary movement. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Joma seen as brains in Marcos bust blast

BAGUIO CITY—Did exiled communist leader Jose Ma. Sison order the New People's Army to destroy the giant bust of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos in Tuba, Benguet, last Dec. 29?

The military is looking into this after getting Sison's message to last year's reunion of First Quarter Storm (FQS) activists here.

In the message, Sison said the real big terrorists in history and current circumstances are United States and its puppets, including Marcos.

Quoting Sison's message, Maj. Elmer Quiros, commander of the military's Civil Relations Service in Northern Luzon, pointed out a direct reference to the bust: "By the way, you should be able to find a legal way of destroying the monstrous face of Marcos on the way to Baguio."

Twelve days later, a powerful explosive shattered the 10-meter high granite bust, leaving intact a part of the chin, the concrete lapel of a barong Tagalog and the general contour of Marcos image. The NPA claimed responsibility for the blast.

The bust, located within a 355-hectare Marcos Park, was built as part of the plan to develop the area into a tourism resort.

The Marcos bust was supposed to be the start of many presidential busts that would be built there similar to Mount Rushmore in the United States," said Mayor Bernardo Vergara, general manager of the Philippine Tourism Authority in 1978 when the park and the bust were constructed. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Let justice run its course, says ex-governor Dy

ILAGAN, Isabela—Former Isabela Gov. Benjamin Dy was mum on the whereabouts of his son Bryan Ferdinand, who was convicted for the rape of two American students in Baguio City in 1994, but insisted that justice be left to run its course in the case.

Dy also denied allegations that he had reneged in his promise to his son-in-law Giovan Bernardino, who was also convicted with the young Dy, to help him financially and in the appeal of the case with the Supreme Court.

The former three-term governor was reacting Saturday to the claims of Bernardino's mother Felicidad that while her son has languished in jail for the past eight years, Bryan has "not spent even one day in jail."

"I have evidence to prove that we are the ones shelling out money for their legal battle. You can ask our lawyers. We never drop Giovan and in fact we're continuously helping him," said the elder Dy, who now tends to his farm in Cauayan City since stepping down as governor in 2001.

Asked on the claim that the Dys were letting Bernardino rot in jail to stop him from exacting revenge on their son, Dy dismissed this as mere hallucination.

"He (Giovan) is a suspected drug addict. A liar. What can you expect of him?" the elder Dy said.

But he assured Bernardino's mother that they did not abandon her son in their quest for justice. "We are doing our best to help her son," Dy said.

Bryan Dy, then 17, and Giovan Bernardino, then 20, were sentenced to a minimum of 12 years in prison by a Baguio court for the rape of two American students in 1994.

Last year, the Supreme Court's first division not only affirmed the lower court's ruling but also upgraded Bernardino's sentence to life imprisonment.

Bryan, a minor when he was convicted, was allowed to post bail during the trial but was not committed to jail when he reached 18. The High Court did not modify his penalty, which was originally the same as Giovan's.

Both Bryan and Giovan have filed separate motions for reconsideration. They want the cases against them reviewed and are seeking an acquittal, arguing that what had transpired was consensual sex.

Giovan, who is married to Bryan's sister Armie, said while he has served at least two-thirds of the original penalty, Bryan has "managed to roam like a free man."

He claimed Bryan has been hiding in the United States during much of the case and up today.

An INQUIRER source, however, said Bryan was seen in Tarlac last month.

The elder Dy refused to comment on Bernardino's claim. "I need not react to that. The issue will only be dragged. Let justice take its course," he said. *Villamor Visaya Jr. PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Pinoys eyed to break Venezuela oil strike

CARACAS, Venezuela—The Venezuelan government will import oil workers from Algeria and possibly India and the Philippines to try to break a 33-day strike by foes of President Hugo Chavez.

"We are expecting the arrival of a delegation of more than 20 people from Algeria in the next few hours. Tanker crews, some experts in energy matters, refining, production, and especially systems analysts, are coming," Chavez told reporters at the Miraflores presidential palace on Friday.

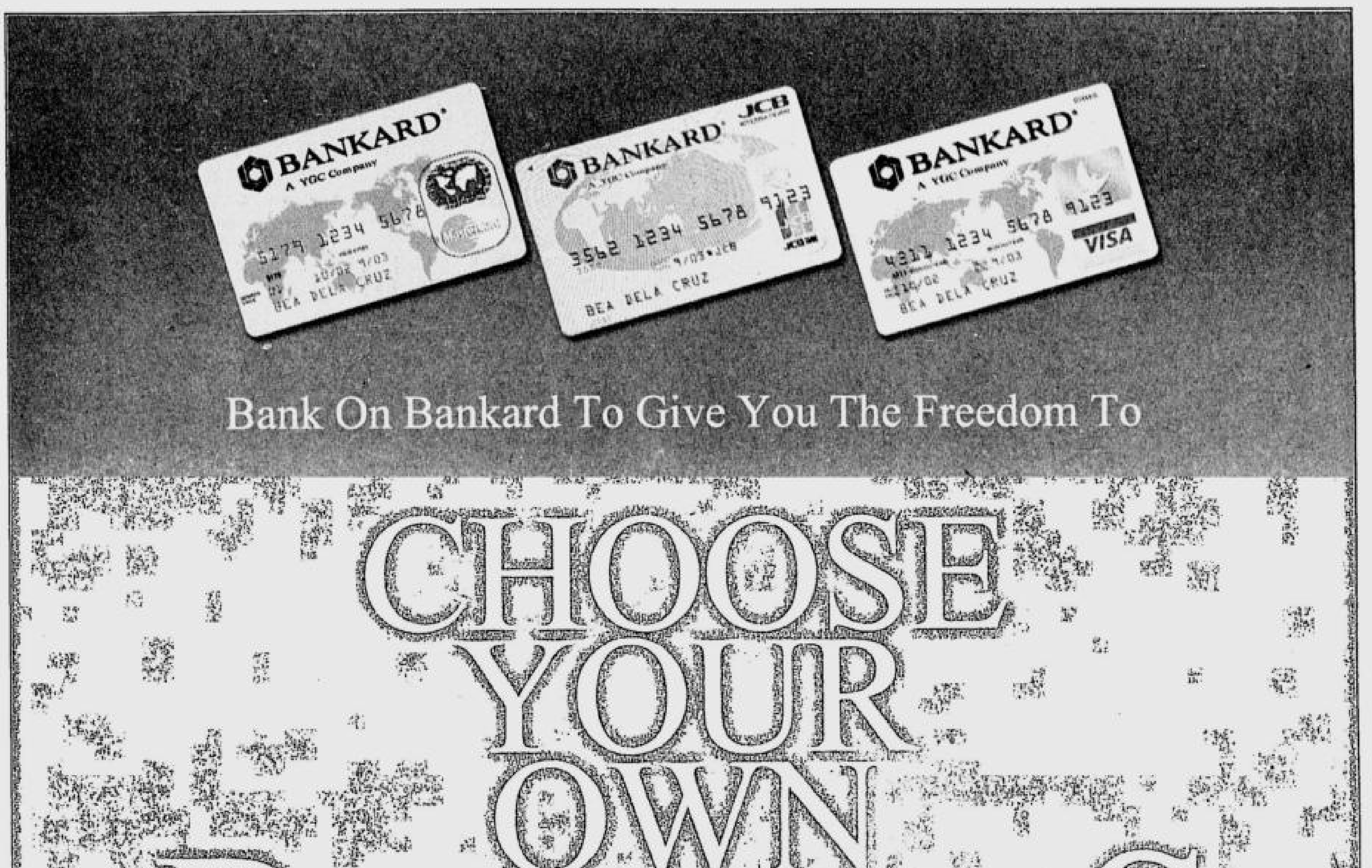
The strike, which has the support of many executives and managers from state energy firm Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA), has slashed shipments by the fifth largest crude exporter and threatened the economy of the oil-reliant nation. *Reuters*

Basconcillo, 61

ARTHUR Torres Basconcillo of Diliman, Quezon City, died on Friday.

He left behind his wife Mila Salcedo, children and children-in-law Molly and Marcial Pe Benito Jr.; Mae, Andrew and Sandy; grandchildren Patricia and Miggy and siblings Flordeliza Gerke and Lilia "Baby" Conner.

His body lies at the Sta. Rita Church, Philam Homes, West Avenue, Quezon City. Interment details will be announced later.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Political fruitcake

EDITORIAL

SPEAKER Jose de Venecia's proposal to set up a unity government is the season's political equivalent of the much-maligned fruitcake. A recycled idea, it is good to look at but not to eat. It may even be hard to swallow.

De Venecia first raised the proposal early last month, after yet another nationwide survey had confirmed growing public dissatisfaction with the Macapagal administration and yet another scandal had reinforced public perception of the administration's creeping lassitude. De Venecia, an acknowledged master of coalition politics, asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to convene a "government of national unity" within 90 days, in order to "remove the poison in the political atmosphere."

After the President shocked the nation with her Rizal Day announcement renouncing any plan to run for election as chief executive in her own right, a stunned Speaker of the House quickly recovered his balance. He reiterated his proposal, calling on politicians of all stripes (and even political leaders wearing revolutionary fatigues) to join a "unity government." He said he had already sent feelers to Sen. Edgardo Angara, leader of the main opposition party, Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino; San Miguel Corp. chair Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., the power behind the second-largest political party in Congress, the Nationalist People's Coalition; and even Jose Ma. Sison of the communist National Democratic Front and Hashim Salamat of the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front

But De Venecia's proposal was a big mistake then; it is even more egregious now.

He was right in one important sense. There was a need for the country's leaders to drain the national landscape of the stagnant, disease-breeding waters of partisan politics. Last month, De Venecia said his proposal would put "an end to negative, destructive and irresponsible politics." But it would have done no such thing. In fact, if post-Marcos history is any gauge, it would have stoked the political fires, instead of dousing them with the cold water of governance.

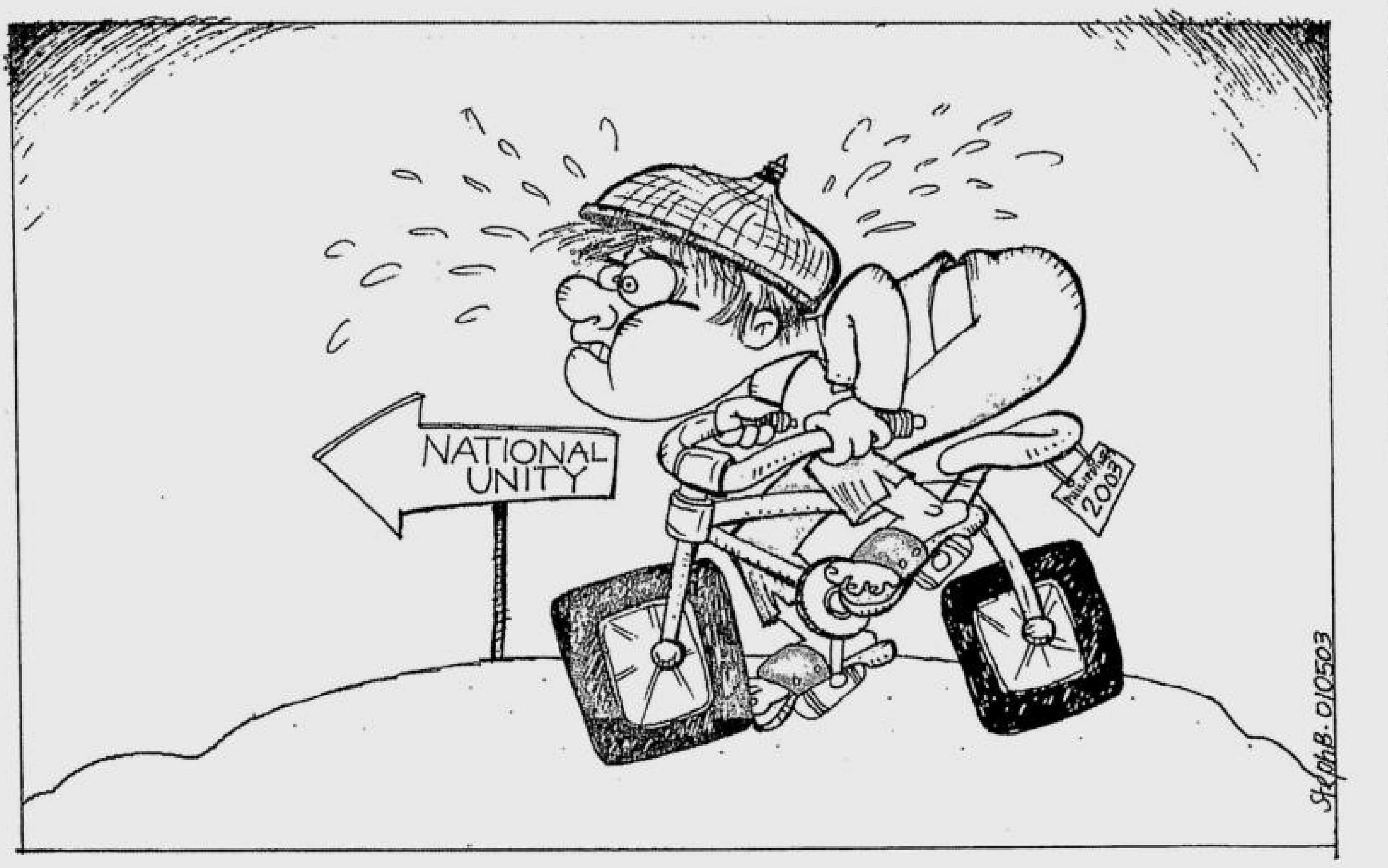
The first Cabinet of President Corazon Aquino was one such attempt at "rainbow" government, and we all know what happened then. Traditional oppositionists like Salvador Laurel competed for precious political oxygen with human rights advocates like Augusto Sanchez, civil society leaders like Solita Monsod, and anti-Marcos Johnny-come-latelys like Juan Ponce Enrile. The result may have been, on paper, a collection of the best and the brightest of the anti-Marcos opposition. In reality, it was political bedlam: the first Aquino Cabinet was not a meeting of her alter egos, as political practice dictates, but a dizzy meeting of egos, plain and simple.

De Venecia's proposal, repeated on the last day of 2002 but now with a shorter time frame of 45 days, would lead to the same sordid end.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., himself no stranger to coalition politics, having survived that first Aquino Cabinet and joined President Fidel Ramos' notorious "marriage of political non-virgins" in 1995, spoke for many when he called De Venecia's proposal "the knee-jerk reaction of a mega-politician."

Malacañang has also been less than enthusiastic about De Venecia's brainstorm. Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye carefully and correctly pointed to the need to anchor any such government of national unity on programs rather than people or even political parties. "The concept is acceptable, but not as detailed," Bunye said. He added: "The general sentiment (in the Cabinet) was that the government of national unity be program-oriented" and not "people-centered."

Now that the President's decision (she is the first sitting chief executive to renounce her right to run for reelection) has served to drain the political swamp, De Venecia's proposal becomes even more unsuitable: it is an inedible idea made even less appetizing. Effectively, the President has only a year to do the right things: to render justice to the issues that brought her to power, to lift the country out of the mire of poverty, to prepare a growing population for the challenges of the 21st century. Turning her Cabinet into a political assembly would make her task more difficult, not less.



Monuments are for heroes

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

I RESPECT the opinion of those who deplore the blasting of that stone visage of Ferdinand Marcos in the mountains of Benguet for the various reasons they have given. But I cannot in conscience agree with them.

That bust was an eyesore and marred the quiet beauty of the scenery. The fact that it was an unavoidable sight to the travelers along that route made it doubly intrusive. It was not the image of a saint calling for spiritual reverence or of a hero inspiring patriotic veneration. It was in fact a reminder of a despised despot and the evil era he imposed upon the land.

After Edsa I toppled the Marcos dictatorship, the Freedom Constitution of 1986 called for the eradication of all the iniquitous vestiges of the previous regime. The most visible of these was the bust of the fallen leader who had been flown by US forces to Hawaii to escape the people's wrath and vengeance.

Despite its obvious presence, the bust was not touched these many years. It was as if it were a sacrosanct symbol of the deposed tyrant and every flaw of autocratic misrule he espoused and represented. Where it should have been blown to smithereens the very moment his government fell, it was instead zealously preserved like a purloined gem.

It was no gem, of course, but a face millions of his countrymen hated for the oppression he forced on them for all of 13 years. The Filipinos had suffered under the rule of Spaniards and the Americans and the Japanese, but the Marcos martial rule was imposed not by foreigners but a fellow Filipino. That made it the vilest reign of all.

During those wicked years, democracy was reduced to a farce, with all powers concentrated in the tyrant by virtue of his fake election under a sham Constitution. The Congress was replaced by a rubber-stamp Batasang Pambansa and the Supreme Court was converted into a docile "legitimizer" of his abuses. Human rights were desecrated. The economy was despoiled by the mega-plunderers, many of whom are still free to enjoy their stolen wealth.

Imelda said the destruction of her husband's concrete face was a sad moment. But it was so only for her and all others in the Marcos court who benefited from his oppressive rule. The rest of the country received the news with jubilation, like a merry greeting for the coming New Year.

Marcos loyalists who would compare the concrete face of their hero to the Mt. Rushmore memorial in the United States are doing him a disservice. That shrine immortalizes four American presidents whose faces have been carved from granite to preserve the remembrance of their great efforts in strengthening liberty. Marcos did not defend but derided liberty and was, fittingly, plastered only in cement.

Those who regret the destruction of the Marcos bust say it was a monument to a dark era in our history that should never be forgotten. Monuments are for heroes, not villains. I do not know that monuments have been raised for Benedict Arnold or Rasputin or Hitler or Ceausescu to remind their people of those scoundrels' wrongdoings. Why not erect a monument to Yamashita, too, to warn us of another Japanese invasion?

And maybe we should also rebuild the Marcos bust and give him a sort of facelift, also in the interest of remembering his misdeeds.

That unsightly monument reminded us of how we cravenly submitted to the commands and caprices of the dictator who held the whole nation in bondage. It was a mockery of the countless heroes of our race who offered their lives in defense of freedom and democracy. The Marcos rule degraded our nation, dishonored our history and compromised our future. As long as it existed, that monument to those tragic years, and to the man who caused them, continued to brand us as a foolish and insensitive people.

The person or persons who blasted that ugly monument deserve a big hand, whoever they are and whatever their motives. They have performed a necessary service for everyone who loves liberty and detests those who disdain it. Marcos has been justly punished, albeit not fully and only vicariously, through the destruction of the hollow visage that had long lorded it in the disfigured mountains.

And as long as we have finally found our national pride and rekindled the national indignation over the abuses of martial law, why not continue the process of eradicating all the iniquitous vestiges of that shameful era? We still have a Marcos Highway and an Imelda Avenue and various streets and parks and what-have-you named after the discredited dictator and his no longer honored wife. It is time to erase their names in all public places and consign them to the dustbin of history.

In saying all this, I do not manifest a vindictive spirit. I simply express the sentiments of the people who, like me, suffered every time a human right was violated, democratic principles were traduced, elections were falsified, the public treasury was plundered, freedom of expression was curtailed, and the privileged few enjoyed immunity from the law and, indeed, were licensed to flout it during the Marcos rule. The face in the mountain was a monument to all these wrongs, and I am glad—like many others—that it was finally destroyed.

Led by a star

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

IT'S a new year and we're still here! This being a new year, let's start with something light and bright. Politics, economy and world peace are heavy and gloomy topics, so why don't we talk of movie stars instead?

Star talk 1: "Kien" is a favorite word of us Pangasinenses. And who is our favorite American movie star? Anthony Kien and Steve McKien.

Star talk 2: It was rumored that John Wayne married somebody from the Ilocos by the name of Pam Molina, who later on wrote her name as, Pam Molina-Wayne.

* * *

The story of the Epiphany (Mt. 2, 1-12) is the beautiful story of the magi who were led by a star to Bethlehem where they encountered the Baby Jesus. A star preceded them. While they were being led by the star, they were just diligent searchers, taking orders from Herod. After they encountered the Baby Jesus, they became grateful disciples with a strong sense of mission and vision for Christ the Lord.

Many of us spend years and even a whole lifetime pursuing worldly treasures and stars, serving earthly bosses and leaders and end up empty, alone and lonely because we have missed the Superstar who alone can fill the void within us. Have you found the Superstar? Are you still in pursuit of worldly stars and still serving lesser stars? Do you still prostrate yourself before worldly cares and dream of money, power and position? When will you really pay homage to the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords in your life, and offer Him not your gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, but your very heart?

* * *

World leaders come and go. Hopefully these leaders lead us to greater visions and missions. Sad to say, many of them lead us only to their selfish agenda and personal ambitions. A leader is precisely someone who can lead us to something or someone greater than himself/herself. May we have more leaders who know how to sacrifice and fade away and who point not at themselves but to something greater than themselves.

* * *

Learn from the usher in a dark movie house who lights the way so that we can enjoy the movie. The usher, as it were, does not light his own face. That would get us to nowhere, and that would lead us to nothing.

Do you still wonder why we are going nowhere in the Philippines? That's because we are still very much personality-and party-oriented in our way of doing politics. And we still just have too much of politics. Period.

* * *

There comes a time in everyone's life when the journey comes to an end and the searching ends. It is a still point where everything leads to and from which everything proceeds.

That moment came when the magi encountered the Savior. It was a "peak moment," a "conversion moment" when everything became clear and everything fell into place. Dag Hammerskjold put it so beautifully: "At one moment of my life, I said 'yes' to something or someone, and that has made all the difference in my life."

Go back down memory lane. There must have been a time when you said, "Eureka" or "Yes!" Remember that while we live, the journey does not end. Be open to more peak and conversion moments. It's a new year. New hopes, new beginnings. Yes, we must be open. We must be hopeful. Our God is a God of surprises and many chances.

* * *

I was in Pangasinan before New Year's Day to carry on our traditional family gift-giving in Cangaluyan Island. About 200 people showed up, mostly children. They were so happy with the little that we could give. An apple, an old toy, some candies, a plateful of *pansit* were all we could give to each one of them, but there was so much joy. I really wished I could give more, but, come to think of it, there is never really enough. Giving never ends. Loving never stops. And it should not stop on Christmas. We have a whole year ahead of us to continue giving and loving.

* * *

Many of us were giving this Christmas. Good. *Pero, sana*, the whole year round, giving *ka*.

And how did you give this Christmas? From the heart or from the pocket *lang*? Out of abundance and surplus or out of sacrifice and "widow's mite?" Out of obligation? Just for show? Just for tradition?

Let the magi teach us to give generously, and to give from the heart. More than this, to give from our very hearts.

* * *

We must continue to be led by a star. Let us make sure though that we are not following RATS (opposite of STAR). Also, let us not follow those who only and always want to be STARRING. Let us not forget that all of us are stars. Little stars maybe, but we must continue to twinkle, twinkle, so that through us, others may see and encounter the Superstar.

* * *

A MOMENT WITH THE LORD:

Lord, remind me that it profits me nothing if I have all the worldly stars but don't have you, my Superstar. Amen.

●

Save the last chance

COMMENTARY

Asuncion David Maramba

EVEN if doubting Thomases can't believe the President's sincerity, GMA's decision not to run in 2004 is a magnanimous gesture. People may view it this way or that, as a "political gimmick" or as "an admission of defeat." "Put that in writing," said Joseph Estrada. "She has risen to the occasion by putting the country first," said Raul Concepcion. Others said it was "one of the most nationalistic things that a president can make." Regardless of what people say, little can dim the essential glow of her gesture.

After all, our country is the way it is not just because of GMA's mistakes or temper but also because of the greed of our politicians, our own fractiousness, our indifference, our habitual belly-aching, our inefficiencies in our workplaces, never pleased, never satisfied, always talking and doing what? Something is terribly wrong with our political culture. (But that's another story).

So bad has the psycho-social situation become that the country seemed to be on a free fall until this "heroic act" suspended us in mid-air, broke the fall and gave us hope. Although it sounded quixotic when Antonio C. Abaya first suggested it, now is the time for the President to form "a government of national salvation...with members drawn from both the administration, the political opposition and concerned citizens from the non-*trapo* communities, including the communists...."

For overnight, the President is free. What a burden politics is, a ball and chain dragged around in the prison that is politics. How much lighter and faster governance will be without that ball and chain. Gloria is the one president who for one and a half years at least will govern with much less wheeling and dealing, less pressure to please, to pay back, to pacify, to balance. Never will any president be so free. "I feel peaceful, liberated," she said. That is a great feeling. She deserves it.

A decision as momentous as Gloria's is nothing less than a spiritual experience. Let Gloria savor the fullness of that experience. She will remember it all her life. It was God who placed the idea in her heart, she said. "God chose the circumstances for me to become President. So He knew that if He tells me not to run, I won't run."

Now is the time for the President's good men and women to stand by her and to take the cue from her to serve for no personal gain. The time for juicy jobs is past. If some of them feel that they must cast around for greener pastures and flirt elsewhere, then let them slink away quickly. The President deserves dedication, and the people, too, after being bereft for so long of inspired leadership. With one act, GMA has restored some moral ascendancy into the presidency that for segments in our recent history has struck bottom. Do you doubt her? Whom else can we trust?

Three forces can spoil the scenario and bring this country crashing to the ground again: Gloria herself if she waffles; and we, if we now expect miracles and continue pouncing on shortcomings, like a cat on a rat. But it is the third force that is most fearsome. We mean the politicians out there who look upon this as a golden opportunity, as usual.

The very day after GMA's announcement, speculations took the front page. One could actually see the pack raring to run. GMA may no longer play politics, but she is ranged before politicians and they will "all" want to run or manage those who will. Candidates or managers, there they are on the starting line:

Guingona: Admirably consistent in his convictions and allegiances, upright and nationalistic. If only he were younger.

Loren Legarda: Too soon, too young. She must chalk up more points besides the pretty Luntian billboards.

Jose de Venecia: Political eclipse too short and recovery too fast to significantly change the *trapo* in him.

Noli de Castro: Please, *naman*.

Ronnie Poe: Please, *naman*, also.

Aquilino Pimentel: With him, how does one know where the wind blows?

Juan Flavier: The biggest heart and perhaps the cleanest, too; the most likeable big, little man. But does the presidency suit him?

Richard Gordon: Tireless motivator who can whip an apathetic, inefficient people to action.

Panfilo Lacson: The shadows frighten. Let him clear himself first.

Edgardo Angara: Intelligent no doubt, but how has he managed to be in the good graces of any administration?

Fidel Ramos: Comebacks are flattering and tantalizing. Will the distinguished former president bite the bait or rest on his laurels?

Raul Roco: The man of the hour; high marks for track record, experience, integrity, brains and competence. (He could perhaps tête-à-tête with the President on the management of temper.)

Have no doubt, the politicians will act like politicians. They will pull down; they will claw. Kingmaker De Venecia has "left out" Roco. If you can't beat 'em, ignore 'em.

Gloria's soul has spoken. Will GMA top herself and back an "outsider" who deep in her soul is the best? And will her cohorts match her magnanimity and back out one by one to give way to the best man? Or will they again be such crabs and hand over victory to them who don't split?

If history repeats, we will be worse off than the first time and the "Queen's sacrifice" may come to nothing. GMA cleared the field for us and not for "them" to dirty all over again with the gore of gladiators. Save the last chance—for God and country.

Asuncion David Maramba is a retired professor, book editor and occasional journalist.

* * *

Comments to marda@info.com.ph; fax 8210659

Can we trust Congress with charter change?

COMMENTARY

Raul J. Palabrica

A CONSENSUS is growing among various sectors of our society that some of the provisions of the 15-year-old Constitution have to be changed to help the country get out of its social and economic miseries.

With the "why" question now out of the way, the next issue to be resolved is how to go about the amendment process. Should a constitutional convention ("con-con") be called or should Congress convene as a constituent assembly to propose amendments to the charter?

If the con-con route is taken, the selection of delegates can be done simultaneously with the 2004 elections. Once organized, the convention becomes independent from the other branches of government. The delegates can do their work as they please, with only their consciences to guide them.

The downside of this scheme is that the government has to set aside at least P6 billion to cover the salaries of the delegates and their support staff and other operational expenses.

In the constituent assembly approach, the two chambers of Congress convene in joint session and agree on the proposed amendments. Whether or not the legislators can meet separately and suggest the changes in a manner similar to the enactment of laws is a big question mark. Since the Constitution is vague on this point, the issue may have to be passed upon by the Supreme Court.

Whichever form the constituent assembly takes, this process, including the submission of the amendments to the people for ratification, can be completed in less than a year. Also, no additional money has to be appropriated for operational expenses because the lawmakers can use their existing support staff when they meet as a constituent assembly.

Question of trust

Setting the financial element aside, the question that lingers in the minds of many is: Can Congress be trusted to faithfully and responsibly perform this delicate task?

The Constitution is no ordinary piece of legislative work. It is the fundamental law of the land. It is the framework against which all laws, executive actions, court decisions and administrative rules are measured. Its provisions influence the country's growth and development.

The proposed charter changes will determine the fate of future generations of Filipinos. The amendments will spell the difference between the country's remaining the basket case of Southeast Asia or regaining its standing as a respectable member of the family of nations. It may even be the last opportunity for the country to prevent a seething social volcano from exploding.

Considering the significance of this task, only men and women who have the best interests of the people at heart or who are motivated by a sincere desire to improve the living conditions of the underprivileged members of our society deserve to be given the power to review the Constitution and propose amendments to it.

The revision of the Constitution cannot be left in the hands of people who by their past and present actions have placed their selfish interests and personal ambitions above the public good. Or who consider public office as an instrument for personal aggrandizement rather than a means for true service to the people.

How can congressmen who have to be bribed with money by their leaders to attend the deliberations on the national budget be expected to propose amendments that will promote responsible and caring citizenship? Are congressmen who refuse to act on urgent economic bills unless their pork-barrel allocations are released capable of crafting constitutional provisions that will ensure the equitable distribution of the country's wealth?

Doubts

The senators are no different from their counterparts in the House. The maturity and national perspective that they are supposed to represent have not been seen or felt by the people for many years.

How can amendments that will foster unity and cooperation among our people emanate from senators who have no qualms about taking advantage of the temporary absence of a colleague in order to gain the upper hand in their chamber? Is it reasonable to hope that senators who refuse to release their findings about the possible involvement of one of their own in heinous criminal activities can come up with ideas that will ensure the equality of all Filipinos before the law regardless of their status in life?

It has been 15 years since the Constitution ordered the enactment of a law that will prohibit political dynasties. Up to now, that mandate has remained unfulfilled. This is not surprising because such law would have adversely affected the political interests of our senators and congressmen.

And these are the people who will be entrusted with the monumental task of reshaping the country's future through the Constitution?

Elections

Undoubtedly, P6 billion is a lot of money. Properly allocated and spent, it could mean many more homes, schools and social services for millions of our countrymen.

But it is a small price to pay for the opportunity to find that group of sincere and patriotic Filipinos who can put their heads together to find meaningful solutions to our social, economic and political problems through the medium of the Constitution.

It's true there is no guarantee that the con-con delegates will be any different from the present gang of congressmen and senators. It should not even come as a surprise if family members or relatives of those politicians make a bid to be elected to the convention for political reasons.

That eventuality, however, does not preclude the possibility (and hope) that a sufficient number of delegates without selfish personal agenda would also be elected to give the right direction to the convention proceedings. In the two con-cons our country had (1935 and 1971), hitherto unknown Filipinos were responsible for constitutional provisions that brought out the best in the Filipino.

No matter how flimsy the hope may appear to be, it is something worth hanging on to because the alternative is worse. Between the lawmakers who have proven to be unworthy of the trust reposed on them and untested con-con delegates, the latter is definitely a risk worth taking. The country will be in no worse condition in the event (heaven forbid!) the delegates go the way of their elders.

Congress should limit itself to enacting the law that will lay the basis for the convening of a constitutional convention. Constitution making is such a serious business that it should be entrusted only to the responsible and honorable.

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People who help and a song on Iraq

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ONE of the earliest greetings we received this holiday season was from Fr. Ben Erkens, CICM, whom we met some years ago at the Tabuk Pastoral Center in Kalinga. My husband Pie and I went to Tabuk to act as resource persons in a campus journalism seminar for students in Catholic schools in the area. We stayed with Father Ben at the fathers' residence, and he has since kept in touch through annual Christmas letters.

How do we make our wishes come true? asks Father Ben in his short letter. "Each can do his or her share! Blaming others for the maladies of this world? ...Try another lifestyle, a Christ-like way of life. Simplicity of life: sharing the superfluous. Then we look into the full meaning of Christmas. That changes our attitudes, our environment."

Father Ben then shares how he, in his own way, has tried to change the world, or at least the world immediately around him. Since 1994, he writes, "I (have) shared with working students your gifts." Some 500 of them have gone on to college, he says, with the scholars themselves earning their tuition by planting 50,000 trees covering 30 hectares in 10 different places.

By March this year, Father Ben adds, "we start another project at Bayombong, seven hectares, 40 students (planting) 10,000 trees." The tree-planting lasts for three years, he says, with the students working during summer breaks, and after which "the trees are sturdy enough and self-sufficient."

Those interested in helping Father Ben continue this unusual scholarship and environmental project may get in touch with him by writing the Tabuk Pastoral Center, Bulanao, Tabuk, Kalinga 3800.

* * *

FATHER Ben is only one of several individuals who for me embody the spirit of selflessness that keeps the country moving and keeps us believing that not everything is lost.

Another such individual I met while interviewing her for the radio show "XYZone," which airs every Saturday from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. over dzAR 1026 AM. Ma. Luisa Ticzon is a young doctor who, even as an undergraduate student at UP Manila and later as a medical student in UST, founded with friends and classmates "Lingkod E.R. Foundation Inc.," which involves volunteers who look after the needs of indigent patients in the emergency rooms of different hospitals.

"It's really a matter of life and death," shares Ticzon, who tells of how she and her friends were driven to found "Lingkod E.R." by what they witnessed in the emergency room of the Philippine General Hospital. "We met some patients whose families were so poor that even if all they needed was a bottle of I.V. fluid, they could not even afford to buy this and so would just go home, most probably to die."

"Lingkod E.R." solicits donations from individuals, families and corporations which they then in turn use to provide for the emergency medical needs of poor patients. At the moment, "Lingkod E.R." volunteers can be found in the ERs of PGH, the UST Clinical Division hospital and the Corazon Locsin Montelibano Regional Hospital in Bacolod.

* * *

"LINGKOD E.R." also seeks to expand its reach through medical and surgical missions, together with other civic-minded groups, visiting poor barangays which only rarely get a visit from a doctor and other health personnel.

Those who believe in the work of "Lingkod E.R." and wish to help it help more people may get in touch with Ma. Luisa Ticzon, executive director, at the foundation's office at the UST Clinical Division Emergency Room, with telefax number 781-4475.

* * *

FINALLY, as the New Year opens to the drumbeat of war drums, here's a song making the rounds of the e-mail circuit. Anonymous in provenance, it nonetheless captures the absurdity of the Bush administration's campaign to whip up the rest of the world into declaring war against Iraq, as well as hints at the American President's real motives for going after Saddam.

Sung to the tune of "If You're Happy and You Know It, Clap Your Hands," here's the reworked song:

If we cannot find Osama, bomb Iraq.
If the markets hurt your Mama, bomb Iraq.
If the terrorists are Saudi
And the bank takes back your Audi
And the TV shows are bawdy,
Bomb Iraq.

If the corporate scandals growin', bomb Iraq.
And your ties to them are showin', bomb Iraq.
If the smoking gun ain't smokin'
We don't care, and we're not jokin'
That Saddam will soon be croakin'
Bomb Iraq.

Even if we have no allies, bomb Iraq.
From the sand dunes to the valleys, bomb Iraq.
So to hell with the inspections
Let's look tough for the elections
Close your mind and take directions,
Bomb Iraq.

While the globe is slowly warming, bomb Iraq.
Yay! the clouds of war are storming, bomb Iraq.
If the ozone hole is growing
Some things we prefer not knowing
(Though our ignorance is showing),
Bomb Iraq.

So here's one for dear old daddy, bomb Iraq,
From his favorite little laddy, bomb Iraq.
Saying no would look like treason
It's the Hussein hunting season
Even if we have no reason,
Bomb Iraq.

Political rebirth

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

BY DECLARING she will not run in the 2004 election, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has done what is unthinkable in Philippine politics: Withdraw proudly when it is no longer possible to run with dignity. Such leave-taking is rare, for the one who is taking a leave is still very much around. The President has freely chosen a political death that earns for her a chance at rebirth. Where excessive politics ends, governance may at last begin.

Elected officials in our country typically spend the first half of their terms repaying political debts, and the next half buying support for reelection. There's hardly any time to govern. As soon as they are elected, they find themselves acting out roles in a system built for private enrichment rather than for public empowerment.

Our political history in the last three decades may be read as a series of desperate attempts to break this curse upon our national life.

Ferdinand Marcos made the first of such attempts in 1972, imposing a dictatorship that he justified as a means to free the state from the grip of an entrenched oligarchy. He ended up creating a new one that in some ways was more rapacious and violent than the one he sought to dismantle. The use of the state primarily as an instrument of private accumulation continued undisturbed, and the absence of democracy made its effects worse.

The first people power swept this aberrant system away, and authorized the drafting of a new constitution dedicated to popular empowerment. But the institutions that would inaugurate a new political practice could not be launched. A new Congress of old politicians blocked all efforts at reform. Cory Aquino's government instantly found itself caught between the adventurism of a politicized military and the security offered by a returning elite. In the end, it chose to abort its reform mandate to ensure its own survival.

The ensuing period of political normalization under Fidel Ramos sought to open up the political and economic system to new players. But it did not change the basic nature of the Philippine state. It remained a captive state, a hostage to vested interests.

The election of Joseph Estrada on an anti-poverty slogan in 1998 was a populist reaction to this state of affairs. It would have signaled a new beginning. But the new leadership had an impoverished view of its role. It could not rise above the narrow interests of the predatory bloc that financed its election. The president, who was adored by the masses, became a caricature of everything that was awful about Philippine politics.

Fueled by modernist aspirations, People Power II intervened and cut short Estrada's term before he could do further damage to the nation. This sudden shift once more opened the political horizon to new possibilities. But at the moment of victory, the concern for instant stability weighed heavily against taking an uncharted path and favored the quick assumption of the presidency by a constitutional successor.

In clearing the legal obstacles to her succession, the Supreme Court could have ruled that the spirit of the Constitution only permitted Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to serve the unfinished term of the deposed president, without reelection. That would have left her with no choice but to fulfill the mandate of a transitional president, which is to govern selflessly so as to pave the way for the emergence of a modern state. But for all its judicial boldness, the Court failed to do so.

From day one, the new President who could not seem to feel secure in her position was incapable of focusing on the urgent tasks of the present. Her mind was glued to the challenges of leadership under a full six-year term she could treat as properly her own. The result of this, as we have seen, has been a presidency devoid of any vision other than reelection.

Today there is hardly anything in the President's record of performance since January 2001 to which she can securely harness a reelection bid. Her declining approval ratings affirm this. Yet all this cannot fully account for her decision not to seek the presidency in 2004. It is, after all, natural for an ambitious and egoistic president, surrounded by the usual sycophants and political operators, to ignore the signs and do everything to avoid giving up power. This President stunned the nation by opting to be different. Having prepared long for 2004, she now says she will not seek it. There is style there and character, qualities that have become extinct among our politicians.

The President has 16 months to show what difference a mind-shift makes. I hope she ignores the leader of the House of Representatives, that last stronghold of archaic patronage-based politics. Speaker Jose de Venecia has got it all wrong when he says that what we need today is a Cabinet of national unity. The Speaker obviously cannot get away from personalities. Our country is divided because the prevailing structure of opportunities works against the great majority of our people who are poor. What is needed to solve this is not a change of faces but of frameworks.

There are enough good people in the present government. Now that the President has freed herself from the imperatives of political perpetuation, they can all concentrate on the real business of governing. That means essentially having concrete social goals, mobilizing public support for these, and finding the resources necessary to achieve them.

We have a new President. Our nation has every reason to be hopeful as it faces the New Year.

* * *

Comments to rdavid@pacific.net.ph

Please send feedback to jsarmiento@inquirer.com.ph

TALK of the TOWN

Editor **Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.**

Will there be a presidential election?

THE HOLDING of a presidential election next year has become less certain following President Macapagal-Arroyo's announcement on Rizal Day not to seek election to a full term. The President's decision has prompted leaders of the ruling party to begin searching for someone to carry its standard, while pursuing their plans to amend the Constitution.

Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri, a Lakas stalwart, said he would support the adoption of Raul Roco as the party's standard bearer if elections pushed through. But Zubiri said "now is the proper time for Charter change" because its proponents had been placed on a "high moral ground."

He said the opposition would no longer have the excuse to oppose Charter change because it would not benefit Ms Macapagal.

In the House of Representatives, all appears set for the final push for the adoption of a new Constitution. Ninety-percent of Lakas members support Charter change that seeks to bring about a parliamentary form of government. A timetable has been set--adoption of a draft for a new Constitution later this year and its ratification by the people in a plebiscite by December or early in 2004. Should the people ratify the new Constitution, there may be parliamentary elections in 2004, but no presidential election. Unless a parliamentary system with a popularly elected president and a parliament headed by a prime minister is adopted.

The plan is for Congress to adopt a draft for a new Constitution later this year and have it ratified by the people in a plebiscite by December or early in 2004

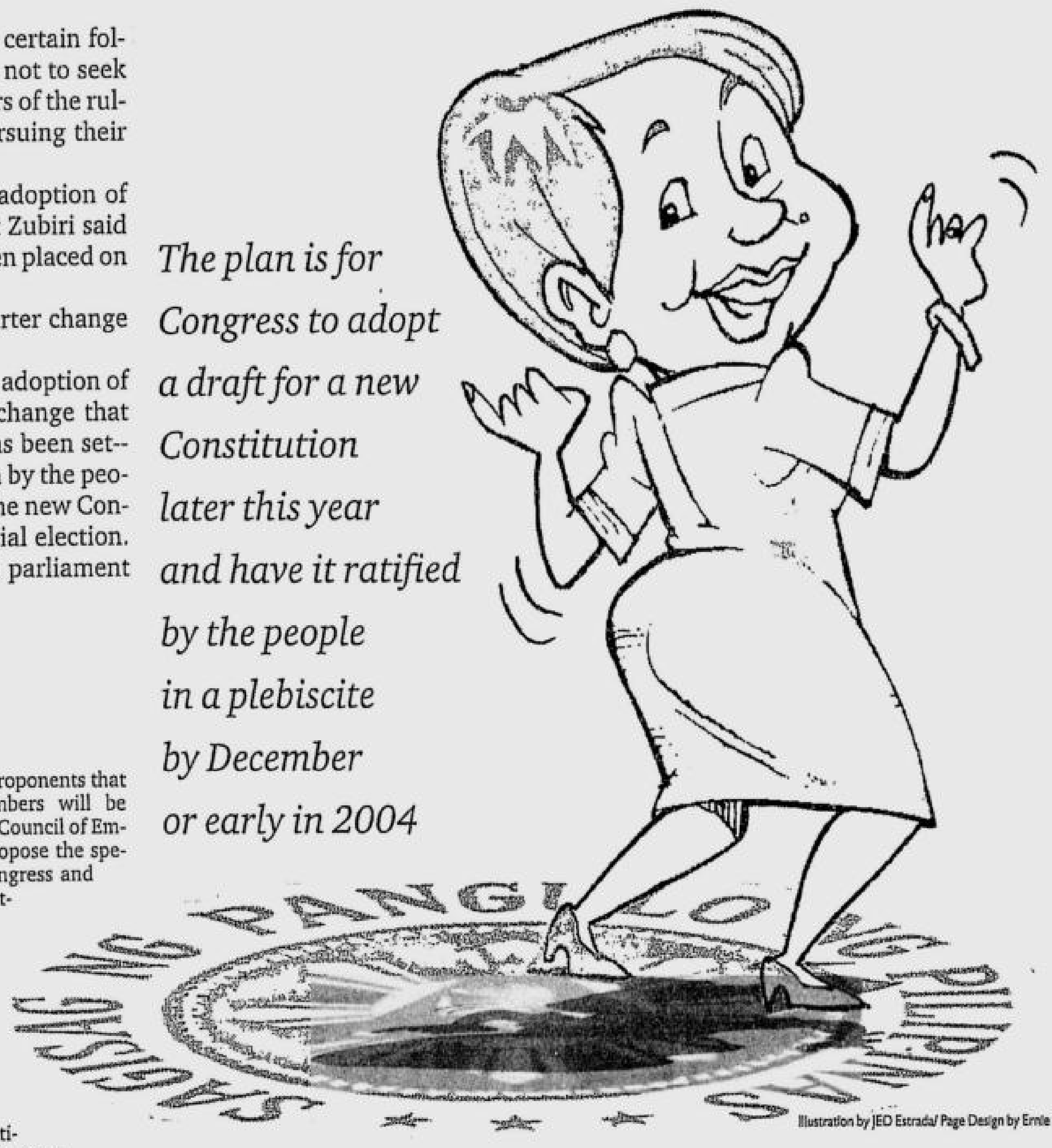

Illustration by JED Estrada/ Page Design by Ernie Sambo

'It depends'

By Jose V. Abueva
U.P. Professor Emeritus of Political Science and Public Administration

THE NORMAL scenario. Yes, there will be a presidential election on May 12, 2004, during which 12 senators and all the representatives and local officials will also be elected. This is the normal scenario and expectation. It is based on constitutional continuity since democracy was restored as a consequence of the failed snap presidential election and the successful Edsa Revolution that ended the Marcos dictatorship and started the presidency of Corazon Aquino in February 1986.

The 1987 Constitution prescribes the election and term of office of the President and members of Congress. Accordingly, Fidel Ramos was elected to succeed Aquino in June 1992, and Joseph Estrada was elected to succeed Ramos in June 1998.

The failed Senate impeachment trial of Estrada ignited people power at Edsa II and his forced resignation and the constitutional succession of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo on Jan. 20, 2001. Her extraordinary succession was accepted by a clear majority of the people and affirmed by the Supreme Court. But Estrada's spectacular arrest and detention for alleged plunder and corruption and the incitement by his partisans at the "Edsa III" rally provoked thousands of his loyal supporters among the poor to lay siege on Malacañang on May 1, 2001.

This dramatized the nation's polarization, which was reflected in the national and local elections two weeks later, although the governing coalition led by Ms Macapagal managed to hold its own. Since then political conflict, contention, fault-finding and allegations of official ineptitude and corruption have intensified in anticipation of the next political showdown.

Under the 1987 Constitution, the term of office of Ms Macapagal will end just before noon of June 30, 2004 when the next President will take the oath as President and serve for the following six years ending June 30, 2010. The President's decision not to seek election to a full term in 2004 has changed the political landscape and the calculations of political leaders and partisans in all camps.

We live under very abnormal times, indeed, as we grapple indecisively with enormous national problems while also trying to consolidate our troubled democracy. While the Aquino and Ramos presidencies restored the formal institutions of elite democracy and restarted our economic recovery under very trying circumstances at home and economic recession abroad, to this day we have not won the struggle against mass poverty, unemployment, corruption, injustice, violence, criminality, and rebellion. Education, health and social services and infrastructure are continually inadequate. The perennial lack of revenues has led to unprecedented deficits and government indebtedness. Our population of 80 million still grows at 2.3 percent yearly. The destruction of the environment is unchecked.

No wonder national surveys show growing dissatisfaction with the way democracy works in our country. Virtually all government institutions are defective and wanting in the people's assessment and so are our electoral system and political parties

The emergency scenario. For these reasons various citizens' organizations or NGOs, academic groups, and some political leaders have been proposing basic reforms in our political institutions that require amendments to and revision of the 1987 Constitution. They advocate fundamental changes in our form and structure of government--from the unitary to a federal system, from presidential to parliamentary government. They also propose reforms in our economic policies, electoral system, party system, and our political culture, to help us break the cycle of poverty and ineffective governance and corruption that have left the nation behind our progressive neighbors in Asia.

When Congress resumes, the House of Representatives will consider the approval of a joint resolution to convene both chambers as a constituent assembly to propose the revision of the 1987 Constitution. So far about nine senators are also in favor of this mode of initiating constitutional reform, and more may be persuaded to join if the Senate can be assured of voting separately on the proposed changes.

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. assures civil society proponents that their leading members will be asked to serve on a Council of Eminent Persons to propose the specific reforms to Congress and advise its committees in its deliberations on the proposals. The plan is for Congress to adopt a draft for a new Constitution later this year and have it ratified by the people in a plebiscite by December or early in 2004.

There is emerging consensus among representatives and senators to change to a parliamentary system. It is not yet clear whether they will adopt the classic model of a strong prime minister and ceremonial president as head of state, or the so-called French model of a strong, popularly elected president and a parliament headed by a prime minister. But the legislators seem to be agreed in keeping governmental power as the historic, imperial prerogative and virtual monopoly of the central or national government, with token autonomy for its regional and local governments. The Speaker talks about providing for a transition to a federal system in the new Constitution.

Under this congressional plan, there will be elections in 2004, but under the terms of a new Constitution--the 2003 or 2004 Constitution. The big question is whether civil society organizations, the Church and religious organizations, business, and media will support this manner of constitutional change. Would they trust the senators and congressmen to be the ones to propose the specific Charter changes? Or would they demand and insist that it be done by delegates to a constitutional convention to be elected by the people themselves--during the presidential and general elections in 2004?

(The author is also president of Kalayaan College at Riverbanks Center in Marikina, former U.P. president, and an advocate of federalism and parliamentary government as a member of the Citizens' Movement for a Federal Philippines.)

'GMA can do a Cha-cha'

By Roberto Verzola
Member, Philippine Greens

SINCE the political conditions that could lead to either an executive, judicial or extra-legal cancellation of the 2004 elections are absent, the other way it could happen is through Charter change (Cha-cha). Are the conditions that could lead to Cha-cha present today?

Before President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's no-reelection decision, the answer was also a no. The public had shot down the Cha-cha proposal under the Ramos and Estrada terms as a ploy to extend presidential terms. GMA had also shot the plan down as unnecessary. The Charter let her run for reelection; why change it?

By not running, GMA has created a new political situation, triggering political realignments. Now, politicians are all rethinking their options, as GMA did hers.

Is Cha-cha now part of GMA's options?

In a way, GMA's options are a puzzle, because her spur-of-the-holidays decision is a puzzle, too. A topnotcher in the 1992 senatorial elections, she was elected vice president in 1998, winning more votes than popular President-elect Joseph Estrada.

As an incumbent, GMA had the power and the resources of the government behind her. Close to power brokers like the business community, the Church, and the United States government, GMA's chances to win the 2004 race were good. Election as President seemed like the climax of her political life.

For a year and a half of what she called "politics-free" governance, she gave it up.

Of course, election to a full term was anything but sure. GMA's rating plunged recently, due to corruption issues. Though government resources may help, they cannot ensure a win.

In 1992, incumbent Cory Aquino's electioneering helped Fidel Ramos win. In 1998, however, incumbent Ramos' electioneering failed to help Joe de Venecia Jr. The bitter loss of her reelectionist father President Diosdado Macapagal to Ferdinand Marcos in the 1964 race probably haunted GMA, too.

If GMA's campaign used public funds heavily, she would inherit the bankruptcy and indebtedness that such electioneering would create. Perhaps, as an economist, she saw more than other politicians the folly of this corrupt practice.

Perhaps, GMA saw it even earlier. In 1969, her father's nemesis Marcos had become the only president in our history to run for reelection and win. But Marcos had relied heavily on public funds. The inflation he triggered was so bad that the peso lost value several times. Economic crisis and political backlash ensued, and Marcos's response was to turn authoritarian, suspend civil liberties in 1971, and declare martial law in 1972.

No wonder GMA dropped this option.

But then, other presidents had four, six, or even 20 years in power, and these were not enough. Are three and a half years enough for her?

GMA seems to think so, if her term becomes "politics-free."

But can it, if her incumbent party mates will soon be campaigning for themselves? Will they forego reelection, too? GMA's first two years had been politics-laden, with little substantial achievement. Now, she has only 2003 for any useful work. By 2004, election fever will set in; very little can be done anymore. Isn't one year too short to reform a huge bureaucracy?

If a "politics-free" 2003 is too short, and a re-election campaign too "bitter," does GMA have any options left? Cha-cha, of course, especially the shift to a parliamentary system.

This system had been a serious option in earlier Constitutions. But, despite many arguments for it, the presidential system had always managed to defeat it by a narrow margin. House Speaker De Venecia's plan for a constituent assembly is the wildcard in the political poker.

If GMA agrees this time, she might later find herself a shoo- in candidate for parliament in her home district. If her party also wins the parliament's majority, then she can again lead the executive branch of government as prime minister.

For GMA, this wildcard seems to have become her best option.

If she doesn't take it, then the 2004 race will go on minus its leading contender.

'Be vigilant against attempts to subvert the Charter'

By Teddy Lopez
Secretary general, Bagong Bandila

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's decision not to run in 2004 changes the circumstances for most of the political players, particularly those hanging on her coattails. These politicians and other interests have just had the wind taken out of their sails. They will now have to try to ingratiate themselves with a new political patron who will be agreeable to tango with them. Thus, in the coming months we will witness the game of musical chairs so peculiar to our elitist brand of politics as it is played out by the traditional politicians.

Already the political parties, if one may call them that, are circling their wagons. As we speak, these self-declared messiahs are now busy reading the political landscape and plotting their next moves.

Anybody who thinks that the President's decision not to run for office would usher in a new political atmosphere focused on resolving the country's problems will be sorely disappointed.

While it gives the President the space to focus on the essential programs that would get this country going, the support she needs from other political leaders, specially those in the legislature, will not be forthcoming as they will be distracted by the shifting alignments that is sure to follow the vacuum created by the President's declaration. (Politicians will be busy making arrangements with whoever will support their ambitions.)

Civil society must then provide the presence to make sure that the executive branch carries out the essential reforms, albeit attempts to make it a lame duck presidency. We have to support the proposed reforms of the President in so far as they benefit the basic sectors and make the country more competitive without unduly sacrificing the security and welfare of our people.

The merry-go-round that is sure to follow may just spawn a host of scenarios designed to grant them a stay in power. It is just our luck that we have legislators with unsteady moral compasses. Recently there were already moves to forestall the elections. Capitalizing on the growing consensus that we have to amend the Constitution, some of our lawmakers proposed to transform Congress into a constituent assembly. However, the task of amending the Constitution might take longer than their terms of office as congressmen. Therefore the proposal was to postpone the elections until such time that they are through amending the Constitution.

To their credit, at that time majority of the congressmen were cool to the idea. However this may change with the new political situation. Left adrift by the President's decision not to run in 2004, they may find it expedient to postpone the elections on whatever pretext, even if only to buy them time to shore up their positions.

In this regard they would have to reckon with the people's desire for a fresh start. Filipinos have been looking forward to 2004 so that the country can put the past behind and proceed with the task of nation building. Our legislators have to listen and understand that our people want to have their say. But then the question begs to be asked, did they ever?

Given that such scenarios might just unfold if left to themselves, civil society must remain vigilant over attempts to subvert the Constitution for whatever purpose. Bagong Bandila will coordinate with other multi-sectoral alliances to mobilize on the issue so that those who have plans of short-circuiting democracy must rethink their position.

Recent history should give the more adventurous elements pause and a reason to rethink things over. Filipinos may be the most laidback people on earth but two Edsas should convince anyone of the depth and breath of our commitment to the more important things that define us as a people. We will never stand for this.

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Odds against Iraq war now seen at 60-40

LONDON—A senior British cabinet minister thinks the odds now are 60-40 against a US-led war with Iraq, even as the British government prepares to order 20,000 troops to the Gulf, press reports said Saturday.

"Before Christmas, the odds were 60-40 on all-out war on Saddam," the Sun newspaper quoted the unidentified minister as saying. "That has shifted to 60-40 against."

Prime Minister Tony Blair's bleak outlook on the Iraq crisis, expressed in his New Year's Day message to the nation, brightened this past week after talks with Arab leaders, the Sun said.

Blair has been on holiday on the Red Sea this past week, providing him with an opportunity to meet with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Jordan's King Abdullah II.

The Times, which also carried the senior minister's remarks, though in paraphrase, said the government wanted to counter perceptions that a US-led war on Iraq was inevitable.

But the Daily Telegraph newspaper said Blair was expected to announce next week the deployment of more than 20,000 British troops to the Gulf, joining US forces already heading to the region.

Blair is the European leader who most strongly backs US President George W. Bush's firm line on Iraq, and his government has vowed to join any international coalition to confront Baghdad.

The Daily Telegraph said British defense chiefs were given plans on Friday for a deployment to the Gulf that would include a Royal Navy force and a "reduced strength" armored division.

The defense chiefs will brief Blair when he gets back home from holiday, after which Blair is expected to announce the deployment in the House of Commons next week, the newspaper said.

"That will set into motion preparations for war which will reach a climax by the middle of this month" as pressure grows on Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein over weapons of mass destruction, it said.

The Times, which is the Sun's stablemate in the Murdoch media group, said Blair and his foreign secretary Jack Straw were "launching a fresh initiative to keep open the prospect of a diplomatic solution to the crisis."

That involves playing down suggestions that a report from UN arms inspectors, to be submitted to the UN Security Council on Jan. 27, would trigger war, it said.

"But they (Blair and Straw) accept that the strategy can work only if the military buildup in the Gulf continues in a way that will mean war is inevitable unless Saddam goes or disarms," it said.

According to the Daily Telegraph, which did not specify its sources, the Royal Navy force—to be led by the aircraft carrier Ark Royal—would set off "in about two weeks."

"At the same time, roll-on roll-off ferries will start loading tanks and other armored vehicles at Bremerhaven in Germany and Southampton," on England's south coast, it said.

The naval force is to include "a commando battle group" drawn from the Royal Marines, plus a commando artillery battery and a commando engineer squadron, it said. *AFP*

DISCOVERING THE RIGHT WAY TO BE HEALTHY

Like the majority of Filipinos, you put health among your top priorities. When asked about what they value most in life, most consumers list health as among the top five, along with food and education.

Unfortunately, health in the Philippines usually comes with a prohibitive price tag. When money comes in, people would rather spend it for utilities rather than medicine. In a study regarding the purchase habits of consumers, it was revealed that only 2% of their household income is allotted to vitamins and medicines, and it usually ranks 12th or 13th among their spending priorities. While a country should allot 5% of their GNP for health care according to the World Health Organization standards, the Philippines only sets aside 3.5% for it.

This simply means that while we Filipinos would like to put health on top of our priorities, we are not willing to or are not able to spend for it.

COPING WITH THE HIGH COST OF MEDICINE

A good example of people's attitudes toward health and sickness happen when a person gets sick and finds the cost of medicine prohibitive. During these situations, they come up with different mechanisms to cope with the problem.

One way is to lessen the dosage of the medicine. If the doctor asks a person to buy 20 tablets, tendency is to buy just 10, and if he starts to feel better, the medicine is discontinued. Another is to cut up the tablets in the hopes of prolonging the time they'll take it. Instead of buying 10 tablets, a person will most likely buy 5 tablets and split it into 2, hoping that it will have the same effect. Other coping mechanisms are substituting the drug for cheaper and inferior quality products without the doctor's knowledge and consent.

Whether it's lessening the dosage, cutting the tablets into halves or quarters, personally altering the prescription, or taking substandard drugs, or those of questionable quality, these self-imposed coping mechanisms can do more harm than good in the long run.

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Bioequivalent. Ritemed products are comparable to the leading brand with regards to time to take its effect, duration and maximum effect.

Therapeutically Equivalent. Compare RiteMed with its branded counterparts, you will see the same therapeutic efficacy and safety profile compared to its more expensive counterpart.

Chemically Equivalent. Even at the start of the production process, RiteMed is equal to more expensive medicine. The same high quality ingredients, formulation and manufacturing process are used for both brands.

Aside from these, the production facilities of RiteMed are **CGMP** approved and certified. The Current Good Manufacturing Practice Certificate is given by BFAD to plants that adhere to the World Health Organization standards. With the seal of approval of BFAD and WHO behind RiteMed, you can be assured that you are making the right choice.

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With RiteMed now in the market, we Filipinos have better access to health and well-being. Medicines with superior quality are now made much more affordable. This will allow people to follow prescriptions, get well faster, and contribute to making the country healthier and more productive.

Find out how RiteMed can be the right choice for you. Consult your doctor about what RiteMed medicines he can prescribe to you. RiteMed is available in leading drugstores nationwide.

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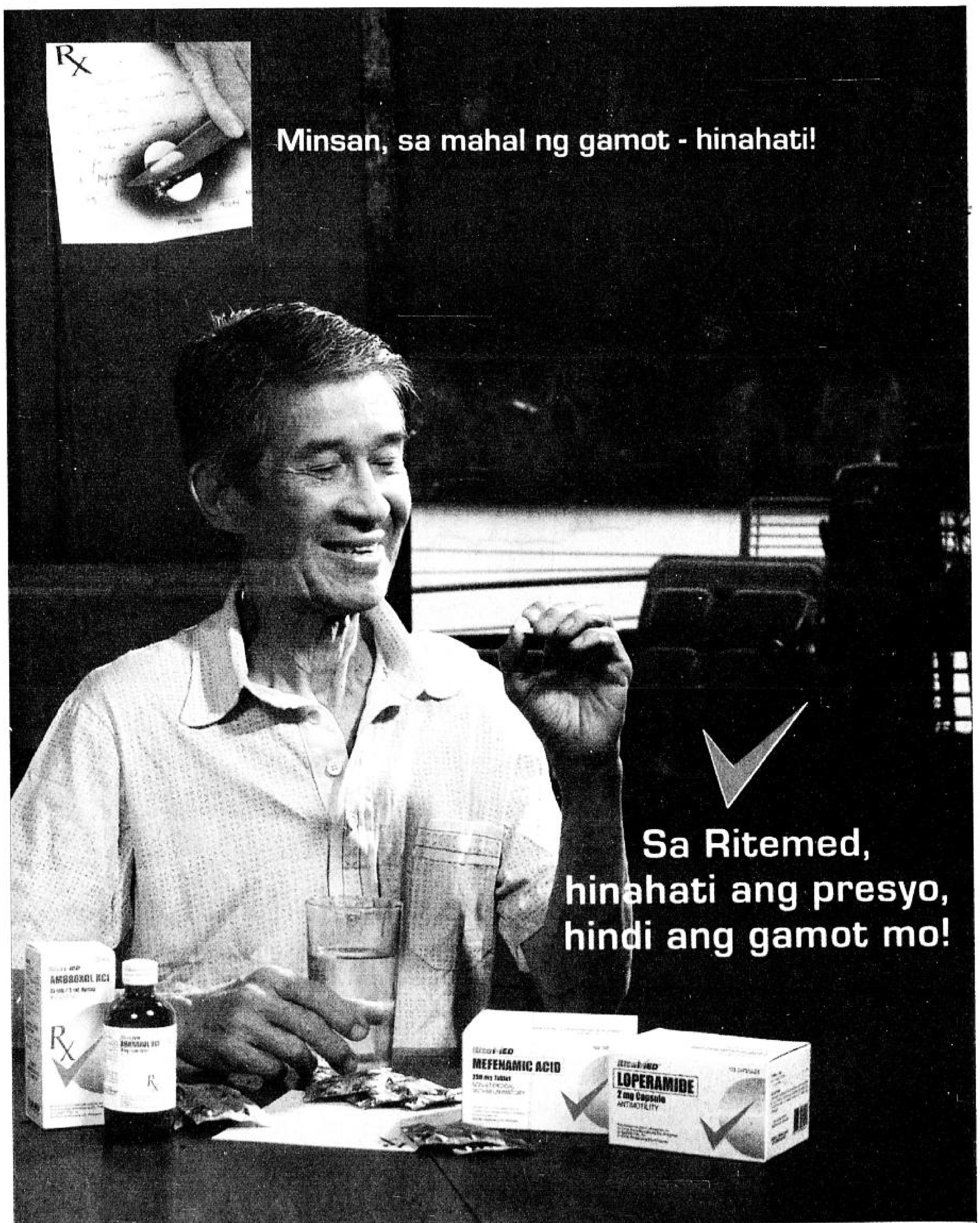

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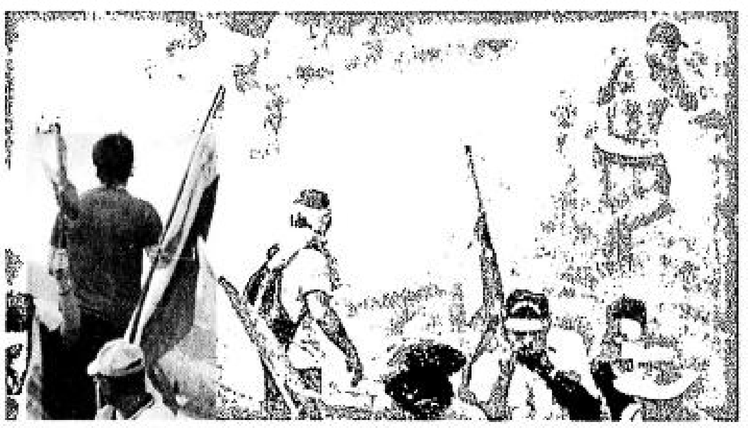
Chavez eyes martial law after 2 die in marches



OPPOSITION protesters run away from tear gas during clashes near Fuerte Tiuna military base in Caracas, Venezuela, Jan. 3. Police and soldiers fired tear gas to avoid clashes between the foes and supporters of President Hugo Chavez after an opposition march arrived at the military base. AP

CARACAS, Venezuela—President Hugo Chavez said he would consider imposing martial law to quell Venezuela's internal crisis after two people died and dozens more were wounded during a march aimed at ousting him.

Gunfire erupted Friday during an opposition march on the headquarters of the armed forces, Caracas Fire Chief Rodolfo Briceno said. Two people died of gunshot wounds and at least 78 others were injured five of them by gunshots.

It was unclear who fired on the demonstrators, who faced hundreds of Chavez supporters throwing rocks and bottles at security forces trying to keep the two sides apart.

"I am obligated to protect the people. I am obligated to protect public order," Chavez said. "If they force me to (decree martial law), I'd have to do it."

But, he added, "So far, despite everything that has happened, there has been no need to apply any exceptional measures."

Chavez made his comments after meeting with Cesar Gaviria, secretary general of the Organization of American States, who is trying to negotiate a settlement between the government and the opposition.

Daily street protests by Chavez opponents and supporters have been common since the opposition declared a general strike Dec. 2 in an attempt to oust the left-leaning Chavez.

Friday's anti-Chavez march deteriorated into a melee after the national guard fired tear gas and rubber bullets at a few hundred Chavez supporters, who were throwing rocks at security forces while waiting for marchers to arrive at a park near the military base entrance.

When marchers arrived and moved toward a security line, guardsmen fired more tear gas into the crowd. Shots then rang out.

The protest lasted several hours in the park, under a veil of tear gas, before marchers dispersed.

Opposition marcher Maria Arismendy crouched behind an ambulance, pouring water over the face of her small, howling dog.

"We're peaceful, but you see what they do," Arismendy said through her own tears. "We just want our country back. Chavez has ruined everything."

The injured included seven police officers, Police Chief Henry Vivas said. Opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez said 11 people were hurt in a stampede.

Vice President Jose Vicente Rangel on Friday blamed "irresponsible" march leaders for trying to enter the park, which the government has declared a security zone—one of eight such zones in Caracas. *AP*

2nd human clone to be born this weekend, says cult

BRUSSELS—A second human clone will be born in The Netherlands this weekend, only days after a cult known as the Raelian movement claimed to have created the first-ever carbon copy of a human, private Belgian television VTM said late Friday.

Maverick scientist and Raelian cult member Brigitte Boisselier told the Flemish television network that the baby, a girl that will be born to a lesbian couple, would "be born in a country not far from here." She also said in the interview which was recorded in the afternoon that it was a country neighboring Belgium but did not say which.

Belgium borders France, Germany, Luxembourg and The Netherlands.

VTM said that Boisselier, formerly a French chemist and the president of Clonaid, later claimed in a telephone conversation with a VTM journalist that the baby would be born in The Netherlands.

A Raelian follower had said earlier Friday that Boisselier left Belgium after claiming the world's second cloned baby would shortly be born in northern Europe.

Last week, Boisselier announced that a baby girl cloned from her 31-year-old US mother was born on Dec. 26 at a hospital outside the United States.

That announcement has yet to be confirmed independently and left the scientific community skeptical.

Then on Thursday, she told French television channel France 2 from Brussels that the second infant would be born in the next few days in a European country, which she refused to name.

Questioned late Friday by AFP the chair of the Raelian sect in The Netherlands, Bart Overvliet, said he was completely unaware of Boisselier's claims about an upcoming birth in that country.

"I am not up to date with all that. I haven't had any contact with Brigitte Boisselier and I'm quite out of touch, so I can't confirm anything to you," he said.

Boisselier, as well as being president of Clonaid, is a senior member of the Raelians, who believe the human race was started by aliens who landed on Earth 25,000 years ago and cloned the first person. *AFP*

France mobilizes emergency workers to clean up oil spill

PARIS—France on Friday churned out new emergency efforts to clean up oil from a sunken tanker that has been washing up along its western shores.

An interministerial meeting headed by Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin laid out the measures. France will initially release 50 million euros ($52.13 million) for the cleanup efforts, Raffarin said.

Among the measures is a dispatch of some 100 emergency cleanup personnel to the affected areas, said government spokesperson Jean-Francois Cope.

Volunteers in the cleanup operation will receive the same legal protection as part-time public sector workers, Cope said.

France will take over from Spain the management of Prestige anti-pollution efforts under the so-called "Biscay plan," said Sylvain le Berre, spokesperson for France's Atlantic coast maritime police.

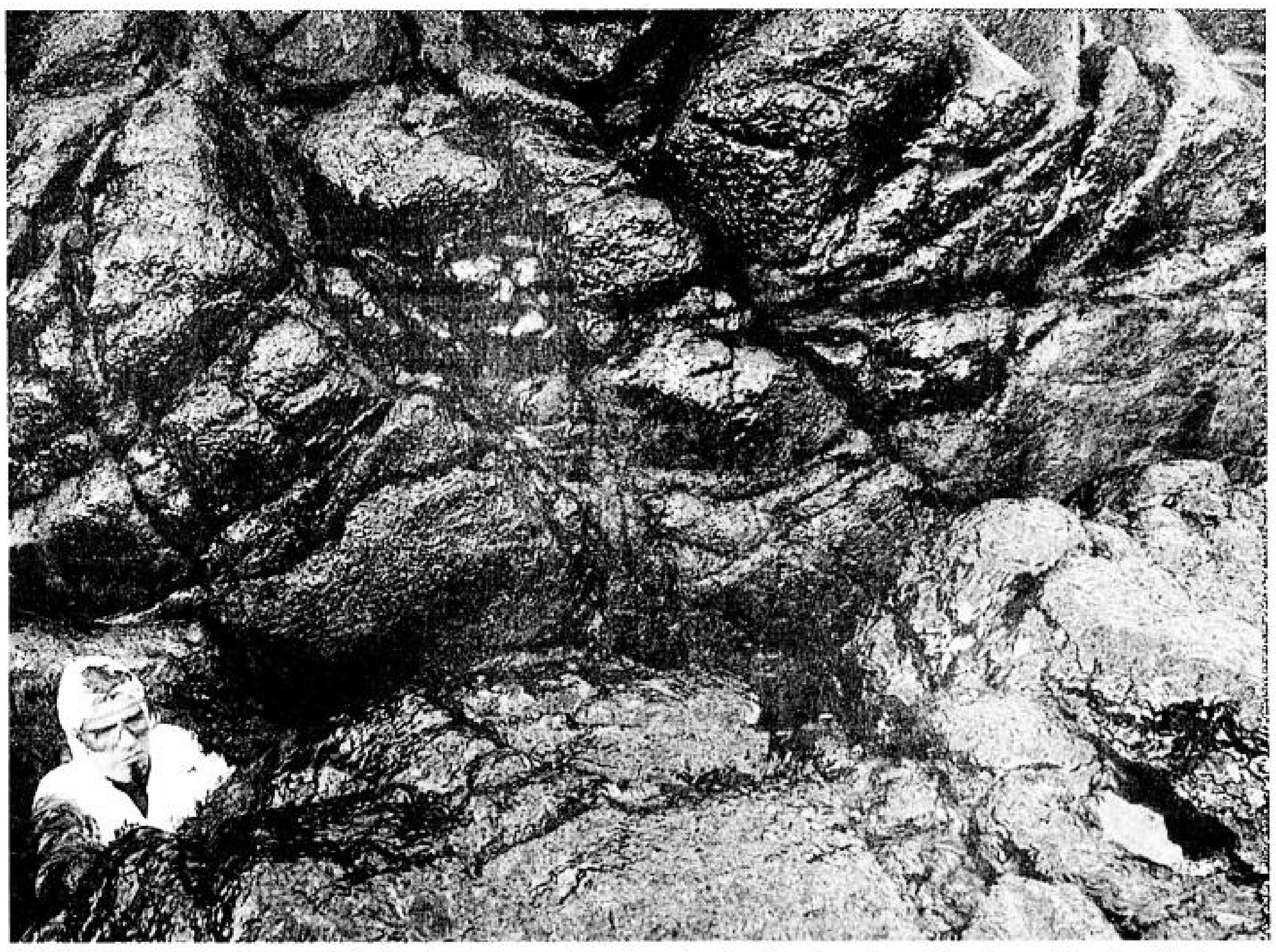
The plan, instituted by the two countries on Nov. 14, coordinates cleanup efforts of Prestige pollution.

The change was being made with Spain's agreement, le Berre said.

"The Spaniards think it's best to dispatch cleanup means to where the danger is at the moment," le Berre said.

Earlier on Friday France extended along its entire Atlantic coast a state of emergency that allows the authorities to use warships and requisition civilian vessels in the cleanup.

In several weeks, France will begin inspecting 25 percent of all boats in its ports carrying hazardous materials, compared to the 14 percent inspected in December, Dominique Bussereau, a junior minister from the transportation ministry, said. *AFP*



A SPANISH soldier looks upwards during cleaning operations along the oil-stained coast near Carnota, northwestern Spain Jan. 3. Blobs of oil from the sunken tanker Prestige, which has devastated hundreds of miles of Spanish coastline, washed up on popular beaches in southwestern France earlier in the week. REUTERS

Mouse testicles hot in Taiwan

TAIPEI—Mouse testicles have become a hot seller in Taiwan after five infertile couples conceived successfully by eating dishes containing the sperm-producing organs, a report said.

The craze took hold after a bulldozer driver in the southern county of Pingtung, identified as Hsueh Ting-fu, and his wife conceived their long-awaited baby about a month ago, the United Daily News said.

The couple had previously consulted western medical doctors but were not given cause of their infertility, the paper said.

Hsueh and his wife first learned that the mouse testicles were helpful to fertility two months ago when they were taken by a friend to a local restaurant to taste a dish made from the organs.

They then bought some six kg (13.2 lbs) of raw mouse testicles at the restaurant, which had become part of their daily meals for more than a month until the wife was diagnosed as pregnant, it said.

Restaurant owner Lin Chia-ho told the paper that Hsueh and his wife had shared their experience with a number of infertile couples, and four other women had conceived so far. *AFP*

Scandal hits Los Alamos nuclear lab

WASHINGTON—The head of the Los Alamos National Laboratory and his deputy are to quit their posts effective Monday, amid charges of rampant theft, fraud and security lapses at the facility, US officials said.

Departing are Los Alamos' director John Browne, a physicist who has been in the job since 1997, and Deputy Director Joseph Salgado. The pair have been at the helm of the facility at a time when it has been beleaguered by allegations of wrongdoing and waste.

Among charges being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Energy and the US Congress are that the top-secret New Mexico nuclear laboratory is missing $2.9 million in equipment—including 263 computers that may contain classified information.

Los Alamos figured in the creation of the atomic bomb and is a principal steward of the US nuclear arsenal. *AFP*

Pacific islanders survive cyclone's fury by hiding in caves

AUCKLAND—Fears over the fate of two Pacific islands cut off since being battered by a powerful cyclone last week eased Saturday after contact revealed there had been no fatalities.

The Polynesian island of Tikopia in the eastern Solomon Islands, and Moto Lava, part of Vanuatu, had been cut off from the outside world after Cyclone Zoe raged through the region on Saturday.

However freelance cameraman Geoff Mackley Friday flew from Vanuatu by helicopter to Tikopia on Friday to discover there were no fatalities among the island's people.

From the Vanuatu capital Port Vila a French Navy Puma helicopter reached the island of Mota Lava to find that, while it too had been cut off all week, its inhabitants had survived unscathed.

However the fate of inhabitants on another island in the Solomons, Anuta, remained unclear Saturday as no contact had yet been made.

Zoe, at the top end of the storm severity scale, hit Tikopia and Anuta, home to some 3,000 people, on Dec. 28.

Mackley, in a report for The Australian newspaper, said the Tikopia people had survived.

"Every single person was alive and there they were, standing in front of me," Mackley said.

The New Zealander said locals running toward the aircraft with tales of survival greeted them.

"The whole way there I thought I would see hundreds of dead and festering bodies but instead we were just overwhelmed with people running toward the plane," Mackley said.

Residents said they had enough warning of Zoe to hide in mountain caves that had been used for centuries to shelter from tropical storms.

But Mackley said the inhabitants were in urgent need of fresh water and salt, and there was a risk of disease spreading throughout the island.

Villagers told Mackley the fruit they usually ate was ruined by the storm and their last water supply was contaminated by salt water and only available at low tide.

"They used communal toilets which were basically holes in the ground, so now there's a risk of disease," he added.

The failure of Australia, New Zealand and France, united in a treaty to coordinate civil relief, to reach the cut off islands sooner is set to become a diplomatic issue for the 16-nation Pacific Islands Forum. *AFP*

BUSH IN TROUBLE AP

Noelle Bush, daughter of Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, arrives at the Orange County courthouse in Orlando, Fla., Friday, Jan. 3, for a hearing on her drug rehabilitation. She was ordered to attend drug treatment after her arrest in January for allegedly trying to use a fraudulent prescription.

South Korea president-elect to propose settlement plan to defuse N. Korea crisis

SEOUL, South Korea—The newly elected South Korean president plans a dramatic diplomatic opening to cool the nuclear standoff on the peninsula—placing himself as mediator between his key ally, the United States, and his erstwhile enemy, North Korea.

An aide to president-elect Roh Moo-hyun said the leader would soon put forward a settlement plan that asks concessions from both Washington and Pyongyang. He declined to elaborate, saying only that Roh is taking "a very cautious approach."

In past crises with the Stalinist regime in the North, Seoul has played a subordinate role, if any. But reaction in both Washington and Pyongyang on Friday suggested finding compromise will be difficult.

"We have no intention of sitting down and bargaining again (with North Korea)," State Department spokesperson Richard Boucher said in Washington.

In Beijing, the North's ambassador to China, Choe Jin Su, said his government would not accept any US preconditions and described the situation as "getting worse, and worse."

The United States demands the North abandon its nuclear program before any possible negotiations. The North says it will scrap its nuclear programs only when Washington agrees to a nonaggression treaty.

The developments underscore Seoul's push to play a bigger role molding developments on the Korean Peninsula and growing domestic pressure to diminish the position of the United States, which some feel is fomenting tension with its North Korea policy.

Seoul has also stepped up diplomatic overtures to Russia and China to seek help in pressuring North Korea to compromise.

On Friday, South Korean vice foreign minister Kim Hang-kyung left for weekend talks in Moscow. The day before, South Korean officials met Chinese counterparts in Beijing. US, South Korean and Japanese officials will discuss the crisis in Washington early next week.

Impoverished and isolated communist North Korea alarmed the world in October by admitting to a US envoy that it had a secret nuclear weapons program, in violation of a 1994 accord.

As punishment, the United States and its allies halted oil supplies promised in that agreement. North Korea then announced in early December it would reactivate the plutonium-based nuclear program.

Pyongyang since has removed monitoring seals and cameras from its main nuclear facilities at Yongbyon, expelled UN inspectors and signaled it may quit the global Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

The United States contends the North may already have two nuclear weapons and restarting the program could allow it to produce several more in short order.

Roh intends to introduce his compromise plan later this month and hopes it will help resolve the dispute before he takes office Feb. 25, his transition team head Lim Chae-jung told a Korean television interviewer.

South Korea's Yonhap news agency reported that one South Korean proposal under study calls for the United States to guarantee security of North Korea "in the form of a letter or a document" in return for the communist North publicly renouncing its nuclear weapons program. *AP*

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World War II veterans' heirs appeal for heroic citation

BAGUIO CITY—Heirs of the country's surviving World War II veterans petitioned President Macapagal-Arroyo to finally declare their parents as heroes of the state.

The United States and most of the former Allied Nations have already elevated their own war veterans to this stature, but the Philippines has not even made this distinction yet, said lawyer Concepcion Luis, president of the Lahi ng mga Beterano ng Ikalawang Digmaang Sanlibutan sa Cordillera Multipurpose Cooperative (Laberco).

At least one veteran voiced out this grievance on Rizal Day.

Despite Luis' letter, the President made no references to the veterans nearby who attended the 106th anniversary rites of Dr. Jose Rizal's martyrdom, complained Sgt. Agripino Melendrez.

Luis, a former coordinator of Ms Macapagal's Kaibigan ni Gloria Macapagal Arroyo (KGMA) here, asked Ms Macapagal "to explore the possibility of . . . (proclaiming) all the Second World War veterans as national heroes of our country."

"(Former American) President Bill Clinton in 1999 took cognizance of the peacekeeping contributions of our WWII veterans towards the cessation of hostilities, and proclaimed them heroes. Should her Excellency find this move in keeping with the propriety of the occasion, we, the heirs of the veterans, will be very thankful," Luis said in her Dec. 28 letter.

"Such a patriotic move shall forever be etched in our hearts for it will give every citizen a deeper sense of our history."

She said the veterans had set their hopes up because Ms Macapagal's father, the late President Diosdado Macapagal, was himself a war veteran.

Gualterio Adalim, regional vice president for Cordillera of the Veterans Federation of the Philippines (VFP), said the VFP "continues to support the reforms that the President has initiated," despite Melendrez's disenchantment.

"We are proud of her sincerity to lead the nation with the supreme sacrifice of self denial . . . being the daughter of a fellow veteran," said Adalim.

Melendrez on Monday said he had been part of a veterans' group, who routinely meets with Ms Macapagal, particularly during her frequent Baguio trips. He said some veterans felt slightly annoyed that Ms Macapagal rarely recognizes them whenever she encounters them here.

But if some veterans don't expect much from Ms Macapagal, the President was profusely thanked on New Year's Day by residents of a Baguio property located within the compound of the Presidential Mansion.

She ordered the release of eight hectares of the Baguio reservation and awarded these to Barangay Lualhati here.

WWII veteran Sgt. Agripino Melendrez EV ESPIRITU

Adoracion Fernandez, Lualhati's barangay captain, cried when she thanked the President whom she encountered touring the Wright Park with the First Family.

Luis, who coordinated the meeting, said former Presidents Corazon Aquino, Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada only leased the Lualhati property to its dwellers.

"But (Ms Macapagal) was the only president to decide that it would be better to just relinquish the land to the residents," she said. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Bicol has 3.7M malnourished preschoolers

LEGAZPI CITY—The Bicol Region had the most number of malnourished preschool children aged 0-5 years as of 2001, said a three-year-period nationwide survey conducted by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute of the Department of Science and Technology (FNRI-DOST), which it released only recently.

Western Visayas and Northern Mindanao regions followed.

The FNRI survey showed that three of 10 children aged 0-5 years are underweight. A slightly higher proportion of them are stunted while six percent are afflicted with wasting.

This means about 3.7 million preschool children are underweight, 3.8 million are stunted while 0.7 million are wasted nationwide.

An underweight indicates an acute presence of malnutrition while stunting indicates past growth failure where the child is no longer actively malnourished or with malnutrition of long standing.

Wasting indicates actual weight loss or recent standing malnutrition.

The survey said the FNRI measured the height and the weight of children and compared them with the National Center for Health Statistics' (NCHS) international reference standard.

Bicol outweighed the rest of the regions in terms of underweight children with 37.8 percent; stunted, 39.3 percent, and overweight, 0.4 percent.

The region only ranked second in terms of wasted children, with 6.9 percent compared to Cagayan Valley with 10.4 percent.

Camarines Sur has the most malnourished children in Bicol, followed by Catanduanes and Albay, Masbate, Camarines Norte and Sorsogon, the survey said.

Legazpi City ranked first among cities, followed by Naga and Iriga cities.

The National Nutrition Council (NNC) regional office based in Legazpi City cited poverty, natural calamities and politics as the major factors that triggered malnutrition suffered by the preschoolers in Bicol.

NNC regional director Josalita C. Armea, told the INQUIRER that poverty in Bicol is really high.

The second reason for the kid's malnutrition, according to Armea, is natural calamities that hit the region during the survey period of 1999 to 2001.

During the period, the Bicolanos suffered typhoons, droughts and floods.

Mayon Volcano's eruption also aggravated the situation, which resulted in the lower production of rice and abaca.

The villagers' livelihood was hit hard, Armea said.

Too much politics also contributed a lot to the children's situation, she added.

"Nutritional programs, for reasons we don't understand, are taken for granted by some local government units, and obviously not given priority," she said. *Ronnie Lorejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Warehouse construction stopped due to workers' death

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT ZONE—Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority officials have stopped the construction of a P360-million fertilizer warehouse here following the death of two workers on Friday.

The two workers were killed while four others were seriously injured when the roof frame of the warehouse under construction at Boton area in Cubi Point collapsed. The warehouse is owned by Subic Seaport Terminal Inc., a freeport locator.

The fatalities were identified as Zaldy Orcalez of Angeles City and Salvador Paladin of Caloocan City.

Dr. Arturo Mendoza Jr., chief of the James L. Gordon Memorial Hospital in Olongapo City, said Orcalez and Paladin died of multiple injuries.

Treated at the same hospital for injuries were Noel Gantang, 32; Jing Argote, 21; Ramil Orosco, 20; all from Angeles City, and Alex Arecela of Bicol.

Deputy Administrator Marcelino Sanqui of the SBMA public works and technical services group said structural engineers have started to assess the accident site to find out the factors that have contributed to the collapse.

"In the time of the accident, rigid frames and walls that were initially constructed collapsed. During the construction they put temporary bracing to provide lateral support and when they tried to remove this, the collapse started," he said.

Initial investigation showed that the victims, all employees of FSO Construction Co., were buried under the steel structure of the building.

Daniel Fernandez, a construction worker, said they were busy working at the site when a beam of the building collapsed, directly hitting the victims.

Manuel Vicente, a crane operator, said he was aboard a crane when he heard Orosco, a welder, shout about a heavy wind blow.

The shout was followed by a loud metal squeaking before the trusses fell in succession, he said.

Orosco, who was equipped with a safety belt, held on to the truss, and, together with other welders, fell on the concrete pavement along with the dilapidated trusses and steel beams. Other workers on the ground were struck with fallen beams. *Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

ROUNDUP

2 escape jail

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Two inmates at the General Santos City Jail in Lanton, Barangay Apopong here escaped on Dec. 25 when two jail guards on duty apparently failed to padlock their cells. The escapees, who are facing charges of car theft before a local court, were identified as Arcebe Bornales, 19, and Benjamin Medrano, 23. Sr. Insp. Carol Borinaga, civil relations officer of the Bureau of Jail Management in Manila, told dxES Bombo Radyo here that Bornales and Medrano escaped by cutting the iron grills of their cells.

Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Moro rebel slain

COTABATO CITY—A Moro rebel field commander was killed in an encounter between his group and the Army's Special Forces in Sultan sa Barongis, Maguindanao on Thursday. Maj. Julieto Ando, spokesperson of the 6th Infantry Division said the victim, identified as Commander Gabi Laginsay, was killed in a firefight with elements of the 20th Army Special Forces team in Barangay Lower Limbalod, Sultan sa Barongis. Two of Laginsay's followers immediately fled after the encounter, the military report said. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Child rape in Ozamiz

OZAMIZ CITY—Police said a child rape was reported every two months here last year, which could have indicated that families of the victims were more inclined to work with authorities to solve the crime. PO2 Michelle Santos, head of the Women and Children Complaint Desk at the local police station, said that in most cases, the victims had close relations with the suspects. She said the attackers were either relatives or neighbors of the abused children.

Ryan D. Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau

3 killed in car crash

COTABATO CITY—At least three persons were killed and eight others were injured when the passenger van they were riding in crashed into an irrigation ditch after a cargo truck sideswiped it in Barangay New Rizal, M'lang, North Cotabato on Thursday. M'lang Vice Mayor Joselito Pinol said the truck was trying to overtake the van, which was on its way to Datu Paglas, Maguindanao. The impact killed Alladin Guiamel, Salonga Lemaga and another passenger identified only as Gulapel. In Makilala, North Cotabato, two persons were hurt when a gas delivery truck turned turtle in Barangay Malasila also on Thursday.

Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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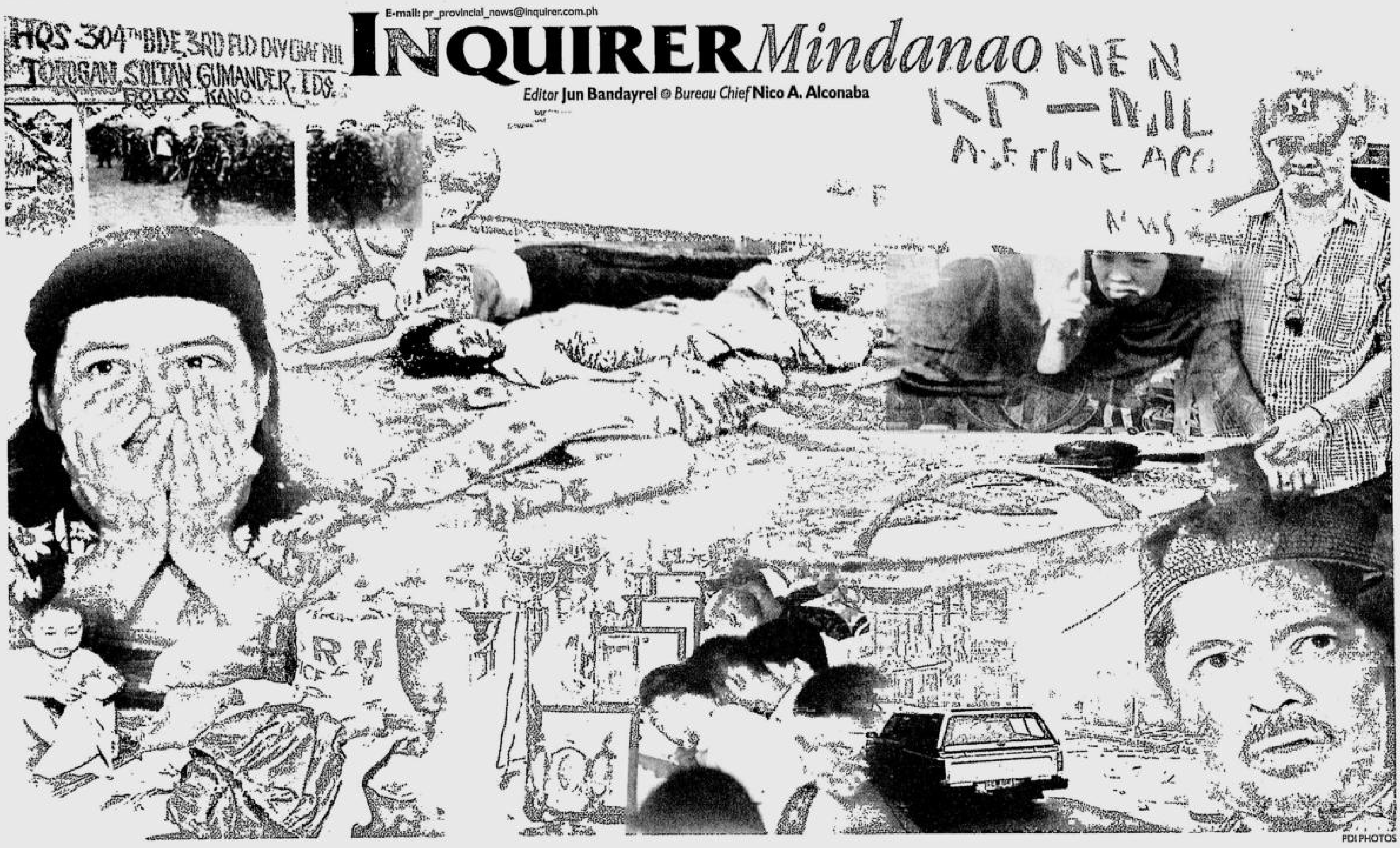
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PDI PHOTOS

Soldiers pray for peace in Mindanao

By Nico A. Alconaba

YEARENDER

"The soldiers are really the ones praying hard for peace because we are in the frontline," was what Lt. Col. Luis Ochotorena, chief of the 20th Infantry Battalion, told the INQUIRER in an article published Jan. 1, 2002.

On the other side of the political fence, Ka Derek Labrador of the New People's Army's Northern Mindanao Region said if peace is achieved, "the NPA will cease to exist."

But in Mindanao, there is more than the war between the communist rebels and the government.

Only five days through the new year, thousands of people were trapped when torrential rains brought floods in several areas of Mindanao.

In Davao City's Jade Valley Village, residents had to climb to the roofs of their houses to avoid being carried away by strong current. Several houses were destroyed in Davao del Sur, while a landslide hit a village in Mawab, Compostela Valley. In Davao del Norte, three towns were submerged in floodwater.

Hardest hit by the flood was the Caraga Region with some 106,000 people affected by the rising water in the provinces of Surigao del Sur, Agusan del Sur and Agusan del Norte. Flooding was also reported in cities of Surigao, Cagayan de Oro, Butuan and Ozamiz, and in the provinces of Cotabato, Misamis and Maguindanao.

Damage to infrastructure and crops were placed at more than P300 million. More than 15 people were killed and several others declared missing.

And just as the floodwater subsided, another came back. This time, it was former Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) Gov. Nur Misuari.

Misuari's return

Misuari was arrested off an island in Sabah, Malaysia on Nov. 24, 2001 for illegal entry. Misuari and 600 of his followers are facing rebellion charges in the country for the attack on military outposts in Jolo, Sulu just as the governor's term was about to end with the holding of the ARMM elections in November. After the attacks, Misuari tried to run away, using Sabah, as escape route, where he was arrested.

The government tried to delay his return to the country fearing violence would erupt. And true enough, violence did erupt.

In mid-January, 21 Marine soldiers, policemen and civilians were killed in clashes during a rally for Misuari in Jolo, Sulu. The mayhem started when the crowd ganged up on Marine soldiers in civilian clothes. The soldiers reportedly mingled with the crowd to gather information. They, however, were discovered when the crowd saw one of soldiers hiding a grenade.

As the soldiers were being beaten up, a jeepload of Marines arrived and allegedly fired at the crowd. This prompted the Moro National Liberation Front integrees from the PNP Special Mobile Group, who were securing the area, to fire back at the soldiers.

A day after what then Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza called a "misencounter," three Scout Rangers were "butchered like animals" in a public market in Jolo.

The Scout Rangers were in the market to buy some supplies when residents started chasing them. When they caught up with the soldiers, the civilians, believed to be relatives of those killed the day before, started hacking them.

After the two incidents in Jolo, the military launched air assaults on known hideouts of Misuari supporters in Sulu.

Misuari remains in detention in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

War exercises

The Philippines and the United States officially launched on Feb. 1 the "Balikatan 02-1" joint military exercises.

At least 1,000 American troops, including 160 US Special Forces, were deployed in the country to help train Filipino troops fight terrorism.

Aside from military training, the US Navy Seabees and Marines constructed engineering projects worth $4 million in Basilan towns.

Militant groups assailed the Balikatan, but most residents of Zamboanga City and Basilan welcomed it.

The exercises ended on August 1.

Journalist missing

On the first week of February, the military launched a search for journalist Arlyn dela Cruz, a reporter for local cable network Net 25 and a contributor of the INQUIRER.

Dela Cruz was last seen on Jan. 19 in Zamboanga City. She was reportedly on her way to Basilan to do a story on Abu Sayyaf hostages American Martin Burnham, his wife Gracia and Filipina nurse Ediborah Yap.

The journalist was freed April 27.

Twin blasts

On Feb. 16, grenade explosions rocked Jolo and Zamboanga City, killing a boy and wounding 49 others.

The blast in Jolo happened in a crowded area along Gen. Arolas Street, while the Zamboanga bomb went off inside a full-packed theater where the blockbuster film "Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring" was being shown.

The military tagged the Abu Sayyaf as behind the bomb attacks.

Quakes, Typhoon

At least 12 persons were killed when an earthquake hit most parts of Mindanao on March 6.

The sea in two towns in Sarangani receded by 100 meters from the coastline while the walls of Lake Maughan, Mt. Parker's caldera, in South Cotabato, caved in, releasing tons of water that washed away houses.

Two churches in Tupi, South Cotabato collapsed while several electric posts in the cities of Davao, General Santos and Cotabato were knocked out.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said it was the strongest earthquake, measured Magnitude 7 in Koronadal, South Cotabato, to hit Mindanao since 1976.

The tremor was also felt in the cities of Davao, Zamboanga, Kidapawan, Pagadian and Butuan, and in the provinces of Surigao del Sur, Davao Oriental and Bukidnon.

It was a month of natural calamity as 27 people, mostly children, were killed when Typhoon Caloy triggered flashfloods that hit several towns in Surigao del Sur.

Pierantoni release

Italian priest Giuseppe Pierantoni was released by his abductors, allegedly members of the Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom gang, on April 8.

Pierantoni spent 171 days in captivity. He was kidnapped from his parish in Dimataling, Zamboanga del Sur on Oct. 17, 2001. His suffering ended when he was freed in a forested area in Tungawan town in Zamboanga Sibugay.

On April 22, 14 people were killed while 60 others were wounded when a bomb exploded in front of the Fitmart-Gensan, a shopping mall.

An hour before the blast, a man who claimed to be Abu Muslim al-Ghazi, the alleged special operations chief of the Abu Sayyaf operating in General Santos, called Radio Mindanao Network informing it of the planned attack. He wanted to go live on air but the radio station refused. Minutes after the blast, he again called and told the radio station that he made good his threat.

Fatal rescue

American hostage Martin Burnham and Filipina nurse Ediborah Yap were killed in a rescue attempt by the military in Sirawai, Zamboanga del Norte on June 7. Burnham's wife, Gracia, was freed.

The Burnhams were kidnapped by Abu Sayyaf bandits from a resort in Puerto Princesa in May 2001. Yap was kidnapped June 2001 in Lamitan, Basilan.

There were reports that Martin was killed while trying to cover his wife from the bullets during the exchange of fire between government troops and the bandits.

The fall of the Master

On June 19, Ruben Ecleo, "supreme master" of the Philippine Benevolent Missionaries Association (PBMA) and suspect in the murder of his wife Alona, surrendered but only after 19 members of his cult and a policeman was killed inside the compound of his mansion in San Jose town in Surigao del Norte.

Violence erupted when cult members fired at Chief Supt. Alberto Olario, Caraga Region police chief, who was then giving Ecleo an ultimatum. More than 200 policeman and soldiers assigned to arrest Ecleo fired back.

The suspect is a son of Surigao del Norte Rep. Glenda Ecleo.

Two days after, another infamous Mindanaoan met his end.

Sabaya's end

The military claimed that the dreaded spokesperson of the Basilan-based Abu Sayyaf faction, Aldam Tilao alias Abu Sabaya, was killed in a shootout with government troops off the waters of Sibuco in Zamboanga del Norte on June 21.

His body, however, still has to be found.

But the then Southern Command Chief Maj. Gen. Ernesto Carolina said he "didn't have any doubt" that Sabaya was indeed killed in that mid-sea clash.

Maj. Richard Sater, a spokesperson for the US forces involved in the Balikatan Exercises, said Sabaya's reported death was "a step forward in the war against terrorism."

Despite Sabaya's death, the Abu Sayyaf continues with its atrocities.

Kidnappings

Before his death, Sabaya allegedly planned the kidnapping of three Indonesians off the waters of Luuk, Sulu. The hostages remain in the hands of their captors.

On August 20, suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits snatched six Jehovah's Witnesses in Patikul, Sulu. Two days after the abduction, the heads of victims Lemuel Mantulo and Lionel Mantic were found on fruit stalls at the Alat Public Market in the capital town of Jolo.

Mantulo's head, his neck cut three times, was placed in a black garbage bag with a note that read, "It's a war against infidel and non-believers of Islam."

But the victims were selling Avon Cosmetic products, herbal tea and medical supplies, and not spreading their faith as earlier reported.

At present, the four female hostages—Mantic's widow Emily, Mantulo's sister Florida, his sister-in-law Cleofe and Nori Bendijo—are still in captivity.

The kidnapping took place weeks after President Macapagal-Arroyo and US Ambassador Frank Ricciardone declared the Abu Sayyaf as a spent force.

Expulsion

It was also in August when Malaysia fully implemented the expulsion of Filipinos illegally staying in Sabah.

Thousands of Filipinos arrived in Zamboanga City and Tawi-Tawi. Most of those sent back to the country recounted tales of horror in the hands of Malaysian authorities. Some claimed Filipina detainees were being sexually abused. One of the alleged rape victims was 13-year old girl only known as Tsina. She later turned out to be a Malaysian citizen. Still, she was sent to the Philippines.

The expulsion continued until September.

On Sept. 13, four teachers of the Mindanao State University in Marawi City were kidnapped by dismissed security guards seeking reinstatement. They were freed after 12 days in captivity.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said the government used a "tried and tested formula" to free the teachers—whatever that was.

Bombs away

On Oct. 2, an American soldier and two Filipinos were killed while 24 others were wounded when a bomb exploded outside a videoke bar in Barangay Malagutay, Zamboanga City. Again, the Abu Sayyaf was blamed for the attack.

Eight days later, another bomb exploded in a crowded bus station in Kidapawan City, killing eight people, including a 10-year-old boy. At least 25 others were wounded by the explosive that was fashioned out of a 60-millimeter mortar shell and flammable fluid.

A week after, two bombs ripped through adjacent shopping centers in Zamboanga City, killing five persons and wounding 144 others.

The first bomb exploded on the ground floor of the Shop-O-Rama department store, killing a security guard and two others. A few minutes later, another bomb went off at the nearby Shoppers' Center, killing two persons.

On Oct. 20, a bomb exploded at the Fort Pilar Shrine in Zamboanga City during an open air mass. Killed was a soldier while 17 others were wounded.

Amid these bombings, the military launched its "preemptive" attacks against the Moro National Liberation Front (MILF) in Lanao del Sur which allegedly harbored some Abu Sayyaf members, including three foreign terrorists.

The MILF denied this allegation and instead accused the military of sabotaging the ceasefire agreement signed with the government peace panel.

Thousands of residents evacuated to safer places, some to as far as Lanao del Norte.

The military claimed it killed several rebels. The MILF again denied this. The military also said it seized a camp which had bunkers that could accommodate at least 250 people.

Bloody Christmas

Tension gripped Cotabato City after Huffer, the son of Maguindanao Gov. Andal Ampatuan, was killed in a shootout during a bikini open show inside a hotel on Dec. 21.

Also killed during the shootout were Jerry Adalin and businesswoman Marlyn Chi.

After rushing his son to the hospital, former city councilor Magno Adalin and his nephew Nelson were also shot by gunmen.

Three days after the incident or on Christmas eve, another son of Gov. Ampatuan, Datu Piang town mayor Saudi Ampatuan, was killed along with 12 others in a bomb blast in his own town.

The military said the explosion was remote-controlled.

Ending the year with a blast

A day before 2002 ended, eight people were killed while 31 others were hurt when a bomb went off in a crowded plaza in Tacurong City in Sultan Kudarat.

Most of the victims were buying firecrackers in a flea market at the plaza, as they were planning to welcome 2003 with a bang. Instead, they ended up dead or wounded.

Datumanong new justice secretary

From page A1

dent that he was not keen on the offer.

"I felt elated and honored, but then I wanted to stay in the DPWH (Department of Public Works and Highways) because I wanted to finish within my term the projects lined up for implementation," he said.

On Friday, Datumanong finally accepted the offer when the President talked to him about it after a Cabinet meeting. "The second time the President asked me, she must have really wanted me to be there, so I felt I have no choice," he said.

Asked why the President chose him instead of the other legal luminaries in her official family, Datumanong said he did not ask the President her reasons. "I presume she trusts ... that I can do it," he said.

Bunye said the President chose Datumanong because of his credentials as a lawyer and a congressman as well as his good track record in the DPWH. "And since Datumanong is from Mindanao, this is also a good indication (of how) the President really gives importance to Mindanao's development," the press secretary said on Radyo ng Bayan.

Highly regarded

In an interview over dzBB, Bunye said Datumanong, a 12th placer in the 1959 bar exams, was a highly regarded Cabinet official. "All his colleagues have good things to say about him," he said.

Datumanong has asked the President to give him a week or two to wind up matters at the DPWH before assuming his new post.

Over the past two months, the President has replaced four Cabinet members amid her falling approval ratings. In November, the President removed Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez and Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor. Last month, Ms Macapagal sacked Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas.

As of press time, the President had not named Datumanong's replacement. But the buzz in the DPWH was that Bayani Fernando, Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) chair, would replace Datumanong.

The new justice secretary said the President had already "committed" the DPWH post to Fernando. "I have an inkling it might be Fernando," he said.

But Fernando, in an interview over dzRB, denied having been offered the post. Even if offered the DPWH portfolio, he said he would not accept it because he wanted to continue his work in the MMDA.

He said he was not sure if he could tackle the infrastructure work for the entire country. "It's hard to get into something we can't handle," said the former mayor of Marikina.

Later, Fernando said he had been offered the DPWH post. "I'm still studying it," he told the INQUIRER when asked about the offer.

Fernando, a three-term Marikina mayor, has been MMDA chair for only six months. He was appointed in June last year, replacing Benjamin Abalos, who was appointed to the Commission on Elections.

Shortly after Fernando's appointment, the President transferred the responsibility for Metro Manila's flood control from the DPWH to the MMDA. In addition, the MMDA will gain control of the DPWH's Traffic Engineering Center this year.

Asked whether he would give Perez special treatment in the prosecution of his cases, Datumanong said, "I will not be worthy of the trust of the President if I'm biased toward Perez. I have to do what the office requires me to do."

Datumanong said he had to "honor the pledge of the President to be a non-candidate in 2004, which means that she really wants the reforms to take place."

"She really wants the country to recover from its problems," Datumanong said. "The reforms must be in place ... all the responsibilities and obligations of the DOJ to the people will be carried out."

The former House Deputy Speaker for Mindanao said he wanted to help the Macapagal administration "until such time that I have to go out for my next political move ... toward the end of the year."

Although some sectors said he was eyeing a Senate post, Datumanong earlier told the INQUIRER that he simply wanted to go back to the House of Representatives.

Datumanong was born on June 17, 1935 in Maguindanao. He received his law degree from the University of the Philippines in 1959. In 1973 he was elected governor of the province.

He was a member of the Batasang Pambansa from 1984 to 1986. For three terms starting 1992, he served as a representative of Maguindanao's second district in Congress.

In 1976, he was a member of the government panel that negotiated peace with the Moro National Liberation Front in Libya that resulted in the signing of the Tripoli agreement.

Erap open to any job in 'unity gov't'

From page A1

country's most famous detainee said he was willing to support the idea—enough to accept "any job" President Macapagal-Arroyo would assign to him.

But Estrada lay down a stiff condition: the "acting President" must first convince him of her "sincerity" by "prosecuting" alleged grafters in her administration.

"I'm willing to go all out. She can assign me to any job and I'm willing to appeal to the people to support her as the acting President," Estrada said in a phone interview.

Estrada, 65, did not say what kind of "job" he had in mind, given his incarceration for the last 20 months on charges of economic plunder.

"We are all willing to help the country, but she must show sincerity by first doing something about the graft and corruption around her."

Later in the interview, however, Estrada said Ms Macapagal might be "hopeless." He said: "Baka *malabo na rin* (It is not likely) that I will make such an appeal."

Parameters!

An opposition senator was even quicker than Estrada to express caution over De Venecia's "unity government" proposal.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. asked Malacañang to define the parameters of the proposed government of national unity before inviting the opposition and other political group to join and support it.

Pimentel said any system or style of governance that democratizes policy formulation and decision-making was laudable and worthy of support.

But he said that this would not in any way prevent the opposition from criticizing any unsound policy of the Macapagal administration.

"This does not mean that the opposition will keep silent when the Macapagal administration oversteps its powers or falls short of its duties," the senator said.

"Even if there is a government of national unity, we will criticize any wrongdoing that may be committed by the administration so that it could be corrected," he added.

Pimentel was also studiously cautious about the President's decision not to run in 2004.

"If the President meant every word, she deserves commendations because that means she would be able to fully devote her energies to solving the pressing problems of the country," he said.

"We have to give her our grudging and cautious endorsement of her statement. But we have to keep our eyes open watching every development," he added.

Pimentel said the President's decision was not a "carte blanche" for her to do anything she wanted.

"Neither will it silence the opposition. We will speak up whenever we see that Malacañang is sleeping on its job," he added.

A strong state is key to economic growth

From page A1

Liberal democracy was transplanted to replace Catholicism. But liberal democracy as an ideology evolved out of, a reaction even, to societies—mainly the strong nations of France and England—where the social sense of belonging to a nation became too domineering that to counterbalance it was liberalism's assertion of the individual.

Here, with the sense of nationhood very much still embryonic, liberalism merely atomized Filipinos into nation-less individuals.

The Filipino "sacristan" who lived in the Church since birth was suddenly thrown out of it, into the marketplace, with no family-nation to remember, or feel attachment to.

As during the Spanish occupation, many of the Filipino elite could even conceive of the Filipino corporation only as a mere subsidiary of USA Corp. Instead of Spain, many among the Filipino elite imagined America as their community.

The American project of establishing a nation-less liberal democratic system targeted the destruction of the religious community created by the Spanish friars, a process that still continues.

The community of the Filipino Republic has not been able to replace that religious realm. What substituted for it has not been the imagined community of the nation but directly felt ones, for many, solely the family and the clan.

After our families, we have come to embrace other communities, to which our loyalty is foremost.

Joma's delusion

A few even mock and plot to smash the Philippine Republic, as the Communist Party of the Philippines does. The imagined community of communist chief Jose Ma. Sison—living in capitalist-nation comfort in the Netherlands with his Dutch-citizen deputy Luis Jalandoni—is not the Filipino nation.

With his dream of a Maoist revolution in the Philippines shattered in 1986, Sison's imagined community is the delusion of a communist Fifth Internationale, whose leadership he thinks is within his grasp after the capture in 1992 of the Peruvian Shining Path Maoist leader.

Estrada's imagined community after his clan was his *barkada* (gang) and his harem of mistresses.

It's not hard to spot the communities we identify with and which command our loyalties. Corporations especially the most prestigious ones ("My prime responsibility is to my shareholders"); the Iglesia ni Cristo; El Shaddai, the Archdiocese of Manila; in the 1980s for some in the military, the RAM and YOU brotherhoods; the Left; NGOs, fraternities, law firms, and even—for some of today's journalists, the newspaper and the television network.

But those quips about two opposition leaders probably describe the sense of community, or lack of it, for many Filipinos: Angara is for Angara; Lacson is for Lacson.

As nation-states' boundaries become more porous and with the speed of modern transportation, for many among our intelligentsia, the community has even been the "world," seeing themselves as cosmopolitans with globalization as a justification.

Feeble sense of nation

The nation-state is a single entity. The feebleness of our sense of belonging to a nation has created a weak state.

For many oligarchs and the elite—from the Spanish days up to now—more important than strengthening the state has been to extract wealth out of it. For some in the opposition, more important than building the Republic is to weaken the hold of whoever is presently heading it in order to assure they capture it in the next elections.

For the Communist Party of the Philippines, the goal is more direct, to weaken the Filipino Republic itself—by pitting its elites against each other—so it can take over to set up a Sison-led dictatorship.

Man's prime organization

All this discussion on the nation-state would be merely as academic as talking about the history of the Lions or Jaycees Clubs, if not for one reality: The nation-state today is the prime social organization of humanity.

The actions of a nation's state determine if millions of human beings, the members of that organization, would live in squalor or comfort. The "state" part of the nation in all countries has become the biggest organization with the largest resources within its territory, whose actions affect the course of its people's lives.

It is only in the past two decades that scholars have uncovered the reality that it is the state in the modern era that has determined the fate of peoples and their economies. There has been nearly a consensus among economists—of even contrasting political ideologies—that a strong state has been the crucial factor in the economic growth of the industrial countries and more recently, of the East Asian tigers.

It is a two-edged sword though. Economists, notably Nobel laureate Amartya Sen, have shown that it wasn't nature at all that resulted in famines in Ireland, India, or Maoist China but those countries' states.

We don't have to look far to understand this. The accumulation of foreign debt coupled with massive corruption during a Marcos-controlled state resulted in a three-year contraction of the economy that had resulted in the deaths, because of lives in squalor, of probably hundreds of thousands of impoverished Filipinos.

But not only during the Marcos period. The consensus has emerged in the past decade among foreign and Filipino scholars that, first the Philippines has had a weak state since after the war; and second, that the weakness of the Philippine state has been the country's overarching problem that explains its inability to develop the economy and alleviate poverty.

No choice

We don't have a choice but to build a strong nation, whose membership has increased from 4 million in the 1800s to today's 80 million. There is no other entity like the Philippine Republic that has more impact on the lives of 80 million human beings and the millions of Filipinos still unborn. Yes, a few millions may conceivably abandon the Filipino nation-state. But the bulk of that 80 million would remain, most of them among the 32 million who would continue to be mired in poverty if their Republic is not strengthened.

A religious person may decide to devote his life to a Mother Teresa-type of helping the poorest and the sick; a materialist taipan may give part of his wealth to a philanthropic organization providing free heart-surgery operation to the poor; ex-communists may devote their organizing skills to a farmers' cooperative.

But building a Philippine Republic—imagining it and acting in our everyday lives as if that foremost community really exists—would affect millions of those human beings who call themselves Filipinos, and the millions more of unborn Filipinos to come.

It is in this sense that building the edifice of the nation-state for 80 million Filipinos and future Filipinos is, as Rizal put it—and President Macapagal-Arroyo reminded us in her State of the Nation Address—a "great ideal."

Sun lights up Tawi-Tawi homes for ₱50 a month

From page A1

the children stay up an hour or two after six in the evening not only to have fun but also to study their school lessons.

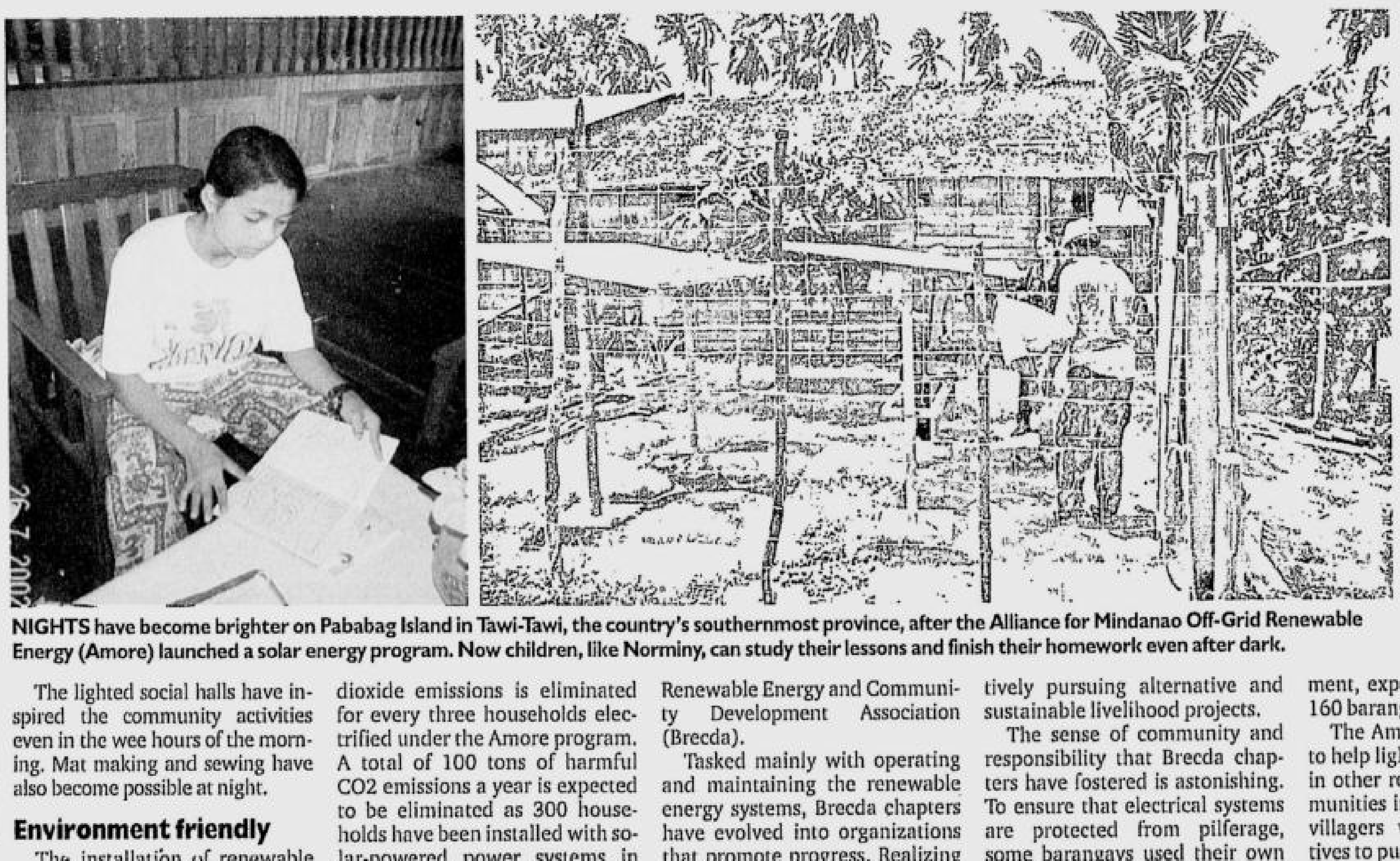
Ladjahali's household is just one of the 300 homes that received solar-powered battery charging stations in July from Amore, with the help of Mirant Philippines, the country's biggest independent power producer.

P50 a month

All 2,500 residents of Lagasan had been using kerosene lamps, which cost them P165 a month. Now they spend just P50 a month for recharging the batteries of their solar-powered homes.

Aside from lighting up individual households, Amore installed two street lamps in every barangay. Imagine the surprise of residents of nearby islands when they saw the island communities ablaze with electric light at nighttime. At one time, a boat docked at Pababag Island after mistaking it for Bongao.

Community members were thrilled to see their social halls lighted up for the first time. "Bringing us closer is among the best things that the Amore Program has done to our community," said one *Tao Maas* (a top barangay official).



NIGHTS have become brighter on Pababag Island in Tawi-Tawi, the country's southernmost province, after the Alliance for Mindanao Off-Grid Renewable Energy (Amore) launched a solar energy program. Now children, like Norminy, can study their lessons and finish their homework even after dark.

The lighted social halls have inspired the community activities even in the wee hours of the morning. Mat making and sewing have also become possible at night.

Environment friendly

The installation of renewable energy systems also has positive effects on the environment. It is estimated that a ton of carbon dioxide emissions is eliminated for every three households electrified under the Amore program. A total of 100 tons of harmful CO2 emissions a year is expected to be eliminated as 300 households have been installed with solar-powered power systems in Tawi-Tawi.

Another achievement of Amore was the setting up of the Barangay Renewable Energy and Community Development Association (Brecda).

Tasked mainly with operating and maintaining the renewable energy systems, Brecda chapters have evolved into organizations that promote progress. Realizing that income-generating activities are feasible with the energy systems, communities are now actively pursuing alternative and sustainable livelihood projects.

The sense of community and responsibility that Brecda chapters have fostered is astonishing. To ensure that electrical systems are protected from pilferage, some barangays used their own resources to install fences and lamps. With its own funds, Barangay Lagasan's Brecda purchased another street lamp.

The barangays have demonstrated useful skills in making Brecda work for them. Aside from the orderly accounting of funds, the villages have institutionalized informal systems to make their monthly meetings well-administered and well-attended.

Many people are joining Brecda. In Barangay Tongsinah, participants readily paid P100 in subscription fee.

After 10 months of operation, Amore has achieved modest success. By September 2004 Amore, which is funded by the US Agency for International Development, expects to have energized 160 barangays.

The Amore program also aims to help light up homes and hearts in other remote, strife-torn communities in Mindanao, providing villagers with economic incentives to pursue peace.

No one should be left in the dark in this era of globalization and advanced technology.

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SUERTRES 2 7 7
SIX DIGIT (In exact order)
3 6 5 3 4 4

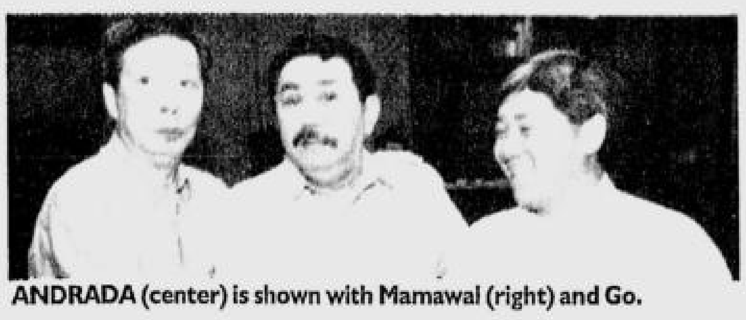
6/42 Luzon
9 10 18 22 24 40
Vis-Min
2 3 9 22 27 32

MAMAWAL NAT'L COACH

Andrada re-elected Philta president

By Marc Anthony Reyes

RETIRED Col. Buddy Andrada was re-elected unanimously as president of the Philippine Tennis Association yesterday for a fresh four-year term.


ANDRADA (center) is shown with Mamawal (right) and Go.

Quickly after his valedictory speech, however, Andrada named his main rival Jovy Mamawal as national team coach to return the favor after the founder of the Children Tennis Workshop withdrew his candidacy in "a show of unity."

Andrada garnered 16 of the possible 18 votes to extend his reign which began in 1986. Region 7 vice president Alex Ngo was absent, while Philta secretary general Johnny Marfil abstained because he served as commission on elections head. The other candidate, Bong Ilagan, got no vote.

"The Phita welcomes Jovy and his group," said Andrada, who is on his fifth term now. "This is in keeping with the spirit to unite and reconcile for the good of Philippine tennis."

As national coach, Mamawal will thus be in charge of the nationwide grassroots development. The job is similar to his role as chief of CTW which has been on the road discovering talents for the past 15 years through the adidas and Milo age-group tennis circuits.

"I reached this decision after consulting my father (former regional vice president for Regions 1 and 3 Fraz Mamawal) and I hope I did something good for tennis."

Mamawal's group was led by incumbent Philta chair and former Parañaque Mayor Pablo Olivarez, who also offered to bankroll the campaign of the national men's team which begins its Davis Cup stint next month.

Andrada, 66, lauded the gesture of Olivarez, whom he considers the "godfather of tennis." However, the Philta boss said the executive council will have to study the sponsorship proposal, which included the use of the Olivarez training center as venue for the national players.

Athletics chief Go Teng Kok was present to act as witness along with Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit but the POC head failed to make it.

Tagged as the "rebel forces" for many years, Mamawal's group also included Region 1 vice president Ferdie Medina and La Carlota City Vice Mayor Rex Jalandoon (Region 6A) who nominated Mamawal.

All set for PSA Awards Jan. 10

IT'S all systems go for the Philippine Sportswriters Association (PSA) Annual awards slated Jan. 10, at 7 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Manila.

PSA president Roberto D. Cuevas said 75 awards will be presented to 102 sports achievers in 2002 during the Annual Awards Night, which will be attended by sports leaders from the private and governement sector.

It will be telecast by NBN-4.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo heads the list of invitees which include Philippine Sports Commission chairman Eric Buhain and the PSC board of commissioners, Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit and all presidents and secretaries general under the POC, awardees' guests and executives of the corporate community.

Other guests include Philippine Basketball Association chair Butch Alejo and commissioner Noli Eala, Philippine Basketball League chair Dioceldo Sy and commissioner Chino Trinidad, all member ball clubs of the PBA and PBL and other sports clubs and associations, Games and Amusements Board chairman Eduardo Villanueva, former GAB chairman Dominador Cepeda, former PSC chairman Philip Ella Juico, and corporate supporters of the PSA.

Chua replaces Black as SLR head coach

By June Navarro

FORMER Tanduay coach Alfrancis Chua yesterday bit the bait offered by Sta. Lucia Realty, taking over from his long-time friend Norman Black as head coach of the Realtors.

After a series of talks following Black's departure, Sta. Lucia Realty team manager Buddy Encarnado said he had finally convinced Chua to mentor the Realtors.

"It took me sometime to convince him (Chua). Ultimately, he saw the merits of my proposal and accepted it," said Encarnado, who also sits as team governor for the Realtors.

Sources said Chua, who called the shots for the defunct Tanduay Rhummasters from 1999-2000, was being offered three years at the least to guide the Realtors.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach Chua for comment.

Black, a former PBA import with 10 titles tucked under his belt, including a grandslam for San Miguel Beer in 1989, steered the Realtors to their first PBA crown (2001 Governors Cup) after 10 frustrating seasons.

"It is regrettable that we have to let go of coach Norman (Black). But in the light of the new direction the team wants to go and because of the current competition (in the PBA) we have to make a decision hinged on what we want to achieve," said Encarnado.

"We want a more aggressive style of basketball and we cannot help but look at Chua as the man who could lead the team to the direction we want to go," added Encarnado.

CHUA: Convinced.

PDI PHOTO

Complete list of awardees known

Top Athletes: Manny Pacquiao (boxing); Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski (equestrian);

Major Awardees: Willie Miller (pro basketball), Enrico Villanueva (amateur basketball), Django Bustamante/Antonio Lining, Efren Reyes (billiards), Paeng Nepomuceno/RJ Bautista, Liza del Rosario (bowling), Angelo Que, Dottie Ardina,Jayvie Agojo (amateur golf), Harry Tanamor (amateur boxing), Wind Blown (horse of the year).

PSA President's Award: Ateneo Blue Eagles/Coach Joel Banal

Special Award: Cris Maralit

Athletes' Citations:

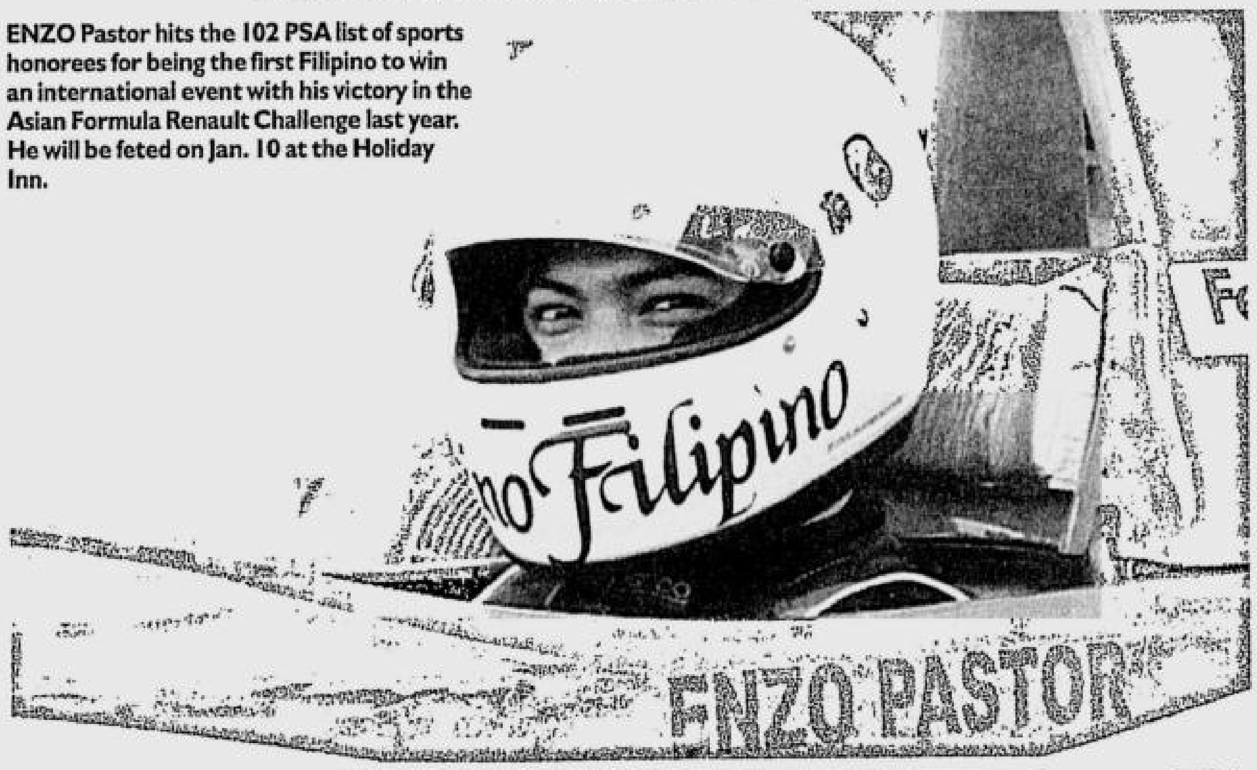
Asian Games silver medalists: Botchok Rey, CJ Suarez, Chester King (men's trios bowling), Warren Kiamco (9 ball singles, billiards), Liza del Rosario, Irene Garcia-Benitez, Liza Clutario, Jojo Canare, Kathlyn Ann Lopez, Cecille Yap (women's 5-player team, bowling), Toni Leviste, Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski, Danielle Cojuangco, Michelle Barrera (showjumping team event, equestrian), Marvin-Sicomen (52 kg, sanshou, wushu), Rexel Nganhayna (56 kg, sanshou, wushu).

Asian Games bronze medalists: Liza Clutario (ladies singles bowling), Alvin Amposta/Nestor Cordova (men's lightweight double sculls, rowing), Jethro Dionisio (men's individual trap, shooting), Jethro Dionisio, Eric Ang, Jaime Recio (men's team trap, shooting), Ria Quiazon, Heidi Chua, Carmelette Villaroman (women's team, golf). Tshomiee Go (men's flyweight, taekwondo), Daleen Cordero (women's semiflyweight, taekwondo), Veronica Domingo (women's welterweight, taekwondo), Dindo Simpao (men's middleweight, taekwondo), Sally Solis (women's middleweight, taekwondo), Gretchen Malalad (60kg kumite, karatedo), Cherli Tugday (kata individual, karatedo), Bobby Co (men's taijiquan, wushu), Eduard Folayang (65 kg, sanshou, wushu), Arvin Ting Chuangcuan combined 3 events, wushu).

International competitions-winners: Angelo Que, Jerome Delariarte, Juvic Pagunsan, (RP Golf Team, World Amateur Golf), Raul Ramon Arambulo (Asian Archery Championships), Enzo Pastor (Asian Formula Racing), Adeline Dumapong, Africita Salazar, Roderick Canta, Paz Enano (Sports for Specially Abled, FESPIC Games)

To be continued

ENZO Pastor hits the 102 PSA list of sports honorees for being the first Filipino to win an international event with his victory in the Asian Formula Renault Challenge last year. He will be feted on Jan. 10 at the Holiday Inn.



Cruelty of coaching; pushing for Percy's PSA award

COACHING, the most cruel job in sports, has claimed another victim: Norman Black. What a way to start the New Year for Black: Absorbing a black eye as Black was fired as Sta. Lucia coach the other day. There couldn't be a crueler way of treating someone dear than that.

Why dear?

Because only last year, Black gave the one who fired him a PBA title. That one was Sta. Lucia Realty, recipient of Black's excellent coaching style that produced for the Realtors the PBA Governors Cup championship in 2001. That was a first-ever PBA crown, and it came nine years after Sta. Lucia joined the league.

If that feat did not make Black dear to Sta. Lucia, then this republic has lost all hopes of redemption. The sanity-restoring crown officially made Sta. Lucia a part of the PBA family after almost a decade of trying. For that, Black was praised to high heavens.

But then again, on second thought, who said gratitude is alive? Kid me not, fellas. People seemed to have forgotten about it: Gratitude is the highest virtue on Earth.

I cannot think of any reason for the sacking of Black other than Sta. Lucia's poor finish in 2002. A coach, like a godfather's *alalay*, always gets the blame for practically every bad showing of a team. The players only win games, right?

But through it all, Black took his fate professionally and I'll raise a glass to that. His display of brinkmanship in the face of a terrible New Year shocker was indeed very remarkable.

"I'm a bit stunned but I'll just have to take it as part of the territory," he said.

Truth is, I'm not surprised anymore. By the very nature of the job, coaching, because it is cruel, is the most unstable occupation one can stupidly cling on to. Thus, seeing a coach getting fired is as common a sight as the sun setting in the west.

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

To be a coach is actually to be ready to get fired anytime. So, to avoid getting sacked, you must win titles all the time.

Easier said than done, huh?

But that's universal although in the NBA, a coach erecting a handsome win-loss record insofar as winning games is always big deal--even if he doesn't win titles.

Why it happened again--the axing of a coach--isn't much news anymore. And because coaches are the most dispensable guys in sports, it's going to happen all the time. And when the next one comes along, take heed in Norman Black's valedictory: "I'll be professional about it."

The hurting is in the inside.

■

To continue on my wish list for 2003:

- Leo Prieto, Florencio Campomanes and Julian Malonso forming a sort of a Council of Sports Elders. Their combined wisdom will be of big help to our sports leaders, many of whom love to engage in petty quarrels rather than exhort their athletes to scale heights on the world stage.
- Edgardo "Boy" Cantada staging his first world boxing bout at the state-of-the-art Cantada Boxing Arena in Bicutan. How about a Pacquiao defense there?
- Percy Della earning a long-overdue recognition from the distinguished PSA Awards Committee headed by PSA boss Bert Cuevas for being the only former Filipino sportswriter to become the Public Information Officer (PIO) of the California State government. Percy is a member of the exclusive American club of about 100 PIOs out of a civil force of 2,000 that runs the sixth largest economy in the world.

SPORTSTV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - Washington vs Indiana, 8 a.m. (r - 8 p.m.), Solar Sports

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: NFL Super Bowl V Highlights, 8:30 a.m., ESPN
NFL Wildcard Playoffs, 9 a.m. (r - 5 p.m. and 9 p.m.), ESPN

TENNIS: Hopman Cup, 11 a.m. (r), Star Sports
ATP Tata Open, 7:30 p.m., Star Sports

ICE SKATING: Bofrost Cup on Ice 2002, 8:30 a.m., Star Sports

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Celestino, Lim post victories

TOP seed Arithmetico Lim of Chiang Kai Shek and second seed Nestor Celestino Jr. scored contrasting wins yesterday to reach the boys' 16-under finals in the 14th Andrada Cup age-group tennis tournament at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Lim scored a 6-3, 6-4 victory over fourth seed Raymond Villarete of La Salle-Greenhills while Celestino rallied past third seed Ed Angelo Diaz of the University of Mindanao, 6-1, 2-6, 6-3.

In the girls' 16-under division, top-ranked Bien Zoleta of Mary Hills-Lucena City outclassed third seed Catherine Flores, 6-1, 6-3, to advance in the finals against second seed Ivy de Castro of Miriam, a 6-4, 6-2 winner over Ara Micayabas.

Bien's younger sister Bambi, meanwhile, entered the 14-under finals following a 6-3, 6-2 victory over third seed Jessica Agra of Colegio de San Agustin. Bambi will meet second seed Julie Em Botor, who won over Nikki Manalo, 0-6, 7-6 (4), 4-2 (ret.).

Top seed Sarah Jane Lim survived Joan Therese Opulencia, 6-3, 3-6, 6-4, and unseeded Jia Marell Elesis defeated Victoria Magaway, 6-3, 6-4, to advance in the girls' 12-under finals of this event sponsored by Thaddeus Sporting Goods and Wilson balls.

In the boys' 14-under division, third seed Russell Arcilla, Jr. of Letran stunned No. 1 Christian Canlas of Ateneo, 6-3, 7-6 (4), to advance in the finals.

In the unisex 10-under class, unranked Alberto Villamor upset top seed Noel Agra, 6-3, 6-2, to advance in the finals against second seed Pocholo Macalino, who struggled past Jacob Lagman, 6-1, 6-7 (9), 6-1.

MAGIC MISS HILL

Hornets overcome McGrady's 40 pts

JAMAL Mashburn scored 29 points and had nine assists as the New Orleans Hornets snapped a five-game losing skid with a 100-89 win over the Orlando Magic on Friday in NBA action in Louisiana.

P.J. Brown added 18 points for the Hornets, who won despite a 40-point performance from Orlando's Tracy McGrady.

The Magic were playing without the injured Grant Hill for the eighth time this season.

Orlando is 6-6 this season without either McGrady or Hill, who has a lingering left ankle injury, in the lineup.

Mike Miller added 13 points for the Magic, who slipped to 18-16.

Trail Blazers 108, Celtics 103

In Boston, Bonzi Wells had 19 points to lead the Portland Trail Blazers to a 108-103 win over the Celtics.

Scottie Pippen added 17 points for the Trail Blazers, who have won nine of their past 10 games.

Grizzlies 116, Clippers 111

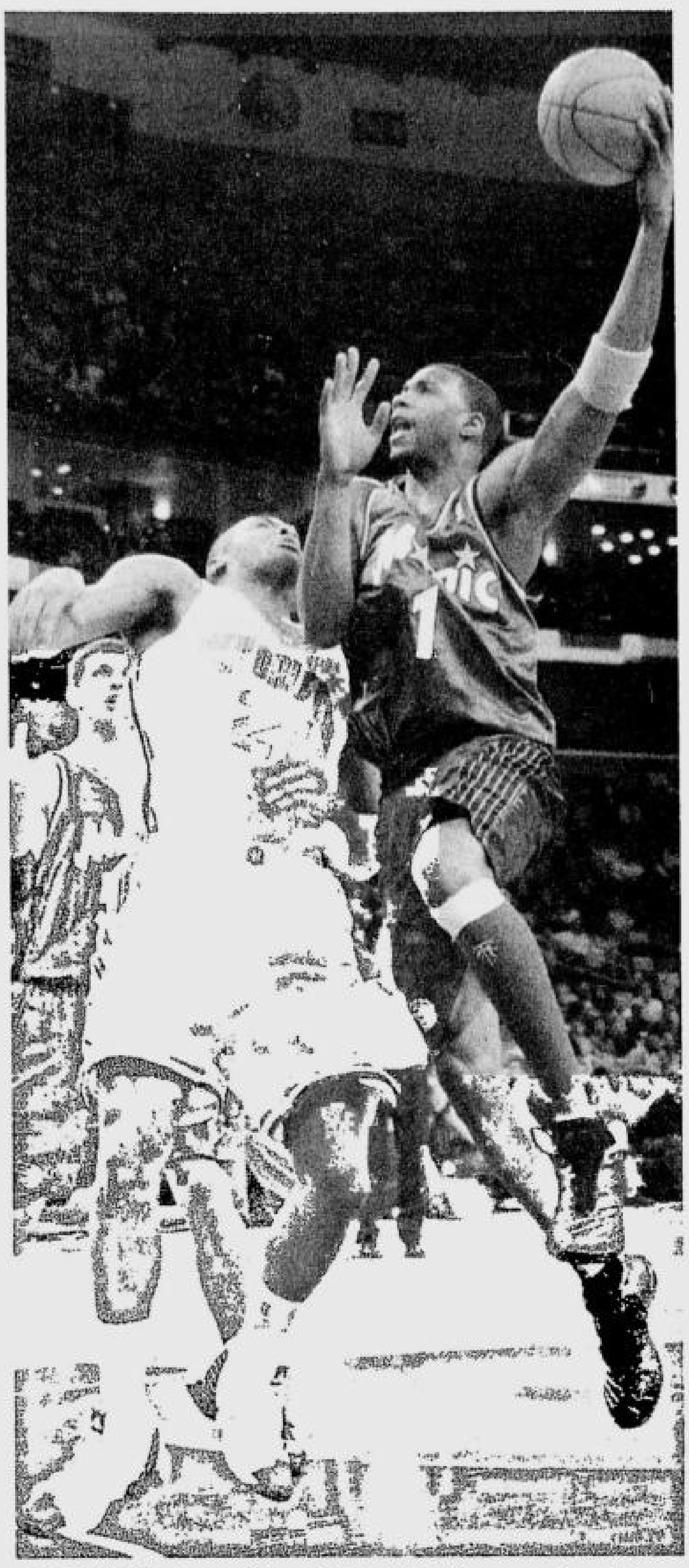
In Memphis, Gordan Giricek had 31 points to lead the Grizzlies past the Los Angeles Clippers 116-111.

Bucks' Thomas sued

NEWARK, New Jersey—Milwaukee Bucks forward Tim Thomas is being sued by a clothing store owner who says he was dropped as the player's agent right before he signed contracts worth $18 million. The suit filed in US District Court says Ahmad Matari gave cash, clothes, appliances and a car to Thomas when he was a freshman at Villanova — in apparent violation of NCAA rules — because Thomas had agreed to make him his agent when he turned pro.

Complete results:

Cleveland 81, Toronto 80; New York 98, Indiana 96; New Jersey 100, Miami 80; Portland 108, Boston 103; Memphis 116, LA Clippers 111; New Orleans 100, Orlando 89; Utah 118, Milwaukee 115; San Antonio 98, Golden State 95; Denver 94, Seattle 82.



ORLANDO Magic guard Tracy McGrady (right) goes up for a shot against New Orleans Hornets' Jamaal Magloire (21). The Hornets won, 100-89.

AP

Ferriols powers Dazz five past LBC-Batangas, 74-57

GAMES TOMORROW
(Pasig Sports Center)
3 p.m.--Cheeseballs-Shark vs John O
5 p.m.--Welcoat bs Blu Detergent

LIPA CITY--The steady presence of slotman John Ferriols worked wonders for Dazz as it outgunned LBC-Batangas, 74-57, yesterday in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Sports and Cultural Center here.

Ferriols, a former star from the Negros Slashers, debuted with 13 points and 7 rebounds and inspired his teamates to work doubly hard against the smaller Blades.

Dazz improved its record to 6-4, while LBC dropped to 5-6 in the upper bracket.

With the 6-foot-5 Ferriols towering in the paint, Dazz gunners Nino Gelig and June Simon confidently attacked the hoop.

Coach Junel Baculi also fielded in all his 14 players, 12 of whom managed to score.

Earlier, Montaña Jewels capped a mighty comeback with an air-tight defense in the dying minutes to beat Sunkist, 83-76.

Egay Echavez and Gary David fueled the Jewels' big fourth quarter show as the Jewels kept their flickering hopes alive for a semifinals berth.

Montaña, which is in the lower bracket, also blanked the Juicers in the finals 2:36 of play to post their 6th win in 11 outings. Sunkist dropped to 2-9.

A blistering start gave Sunkist an early, 26-14 lead. Olan Omiping, who led Sunkist with 24 points, continued to wax hot as the Juicers ruled the half, 46-33.

Dennis U. Eroa

Scores:

DAZZ 74--Ferriols 13. Gelig 10, Simon 10, Mercado 8, Dy 8, Tan 6, Salangsang 6, Baguio 5, Jones 2, Luanzon 2, Saquilayan 2, Espiritu 2, Razon 0, Dualan 0.

LBC 57--Compton 14, Uy 8, Sta Cruz 6, Roldan 6, De Castro 4, Cuevas 4, Capati 3, Rivera 2, Magpayo 2, Baguion 2, Reguera 2, Manabat 0, San Diego 0.

Quarters: 21-24, 38-40, 50-60,74-57

Blake upsets Hewitt; US wins

PERTH, Australia — James Blake upset Lleyton Hewitt, 6-3, 6-4, and Serena Williams beat Alicia Molik, 6-2, 6-3, Saturday to give the United States its second Hopman Cup team tennis title.

The victories gave the Americans a winning 2-0 lead, with a mixed doubles match to follow. It was Blake's first win in five matches against Hewitt and came in just 64 minutes.

Molik, ranked No. 94, had not dropped a set in the mixed teams event heading into the opening singles Saturday, but world top-ranked Williams was an easy winner.

It was the sixth appearance in the final for the United States in the 15 years of the competition, and their third final in three years. Their only previous win came in 1997 when Justin Gimelstob and Chanda Rubin beat Wayne Ferreira and Amanda Coetzer of South Africa.

Hewitt, who also lost to Jiri Novak in the round-robin stage of the competition, could not handle the variety and quality of Blake's game.

The American mixed up his game by attacking the net, trading groundstrokes and unleashing a strong forehand that often left Hewitt helpless.

But Hewitt provided strong resistance at times, and Blake struggled to take the first set. He broke just once to lead 4-2, but had to hold off two break points in the next game and three more at 5-3, before taking the set on his third set point.

Blake's game became stronger in the second set as he swept to a 4-0 lead.

Hewitt then dropped just one point in the next two games to bring himself back into contention, and although Blake kept in front he again struggled to hold off Hewitt's late challenge.

Blake broke to lead 5-2 when Hewitt hit his third double-fault, but he failed to serve out for victory at his first attempt. Hewitt broke and held for 4-5, before a relieved Blake closed out the 64-minute battle when Hewitt's return backhand went into the net. AP

SAMSUNG DIGITall

GOLF SUPPORTER

Philippine Junior Golf Federation president Edgardo "Boy" Cantada (extreme left) and Samsung Electronics Phils. Corp. president and CEO Sang Youl Eom seal the agreement making Samsung the title sponsor of the 6th Samsung Philippine International Junior Golf Championship starting Jan. 7 at Wack Wack. Also in photo is tournament director Gerard Cantada (extreme right).

Ohio prevails in 2 OTs

By Richard Rosenblatt
AP Football Writer

TEMPE, Arizona—Ohio State worked two overtimes to rip the national championship from the confident 'Canes in one of the greatest college football games ever.

Maurice Clarett ran 5 yards for the winning touchdown, and Ohio State's defense turned back one final Miami bid to tie the game. With that, the Buckeyes completed an unlikely, unbeaten run to their first national title in 34 years with a 31-24 win Friday night at the Fiesta Bowl.

The Buckeyes, 11½-point underdogs, ended the Hurricanes' bid for a second straight title and their winning streak at 34.

"It's no different than what we've done all year," Ohio State quarterback Craig Krenzel said. "We make plays in the big games when we have to."

But it would have never happened if not for a late pass interference call at the end of the first overtime — which came with Miami players already celebrating an apparent championship.

Instead, the fourth-down call gave Ohio State the chance it needed to tie the game and send it into the second overtime.

Kareristas' wishes

ONE WINNER

Edwin Villanueva

MY Silip Boy went OTBS-hopping during the Holidays and found out that *kareristas* are wishing for the following in 2003:

- Another successful campaign for Wind Blown.
- Wind Blown facing Audrey's Savings again.
- More victories for the Hermie Esguerra Stable.
- High Octane, with a new jockey, battling Security Master again.
- Jesus "El Maestro" Guce competing anew.
- A long-deserved Jockey of the Year Award for F. M. Raquel Jr.
- Marho staging another record-setting RP Breeders' Cup festival.
- Putch Puyat and Sandy Javier staying as Marho leaders.
- Athletics boss Go Teng Kok rekindling his interest in the races.
- A new Triple Crown champion.
- The Philracom under chairman Jimmy Dilag intensifying its drive against erring jockeys, trainers and illegal bookie joints.
- A new set of commentators at Santa Ana.
- Bigger pots in the Winner-Take-All and Pick-6 events.
- Philtobo holding another successful Mitra Cup Championships.
- A fresh batch of talented graduates from the jockeys' academy.
- Gross sales for the year hitting more than P8 billion.
- More off-track betting stations around the country.
- Bigger prizes courtesy of the Philracom, PCSO and other corporate sponsors.
- Wind Blown running again in the Presidential Gold Cup and Classic Open, and
- No more racing festival backed by a bogus horseracing group.

As for my Silip Boy? It's his ardent wish to finally become a "One Winner" in the WTA. Good luck!

***

Allan Ruiz of San Andres, Manila wants to know what's causing the delay in flagging off the races at San Lazaro.

"Last Wednesday night *pa po namin napansin na ang tagal largahan ng bawa't karera. Ano kaya ang dahilan? Nakakabagot tuloy,"* Ruiz told us over the phone yesterday.

Just like Mr. Ruiz, we and the rest of the *bayang karerista* are also at a loss.

Let's hope it won't be that way again when the races shift back to the Tayuman race track.

Huge turnout for Baguio RGFFP golf

AS the deadline for the early bird registration nears, organizers of the 17th annual Rotary Golfing Fellowship Foundation of the Philippines (RGFFP) tournament on Jan. 16-18 are preparing for a deluge of entries that will definitely breach the 200-player mark.

The bulk of the entry roster is expected to be finalized on or before the deadline set on Jan. 8 with a mix of swinging Rotarians, foreign visitors and local guests shooting it out at the Baguio Country Club and Camp John Hay courses.

Bimbo Salazar, chair of the RGFFP, said that the positive response made by golfing Rotarians from all over the country and the outpouring of support from sponsors have ensured the continuing success of one of the country's biggest Rotary gatherings.

Salazar and the RGFFP board have been in the forefront of the preparations for the big bash which will be ushered in by a welcome dinner for the registered and paid tournament participants on January 10 at the Maharlika Lounge of Casino Filipino Parañaque.

Salazar said that the allure of Baguio's perfect golfing weather will bring a big number of Rotarians together in a friendly competition.

Team captains meeting and tour format orientation for the Manila-based Rotary Clubs will also be held at the said complex at an earlier time.

Taylor Made has once more thrown its support behind the event as a major sponsor. Other sponsors are Zeta Mark Inc./Omega Watch, Zuellig Insurance Brokers, General Nutrition Center, Fed Ex Airfreight 2100, Baguio Country Club, Camp John Hay Golf Club, Stork Candies and Menzi & Co. Rotarians making it to the deadline of the early bird discounted tournament fee will only pay P4,500.00. Late registrants will be charged P5,500.

The Baguio leg will be a part of the airing of the 2003 RGFFP tournament series this year including stages in Bacolod, Mimosa and a still to be announced foreign venue on a major television station.

For inquiries, please call tournament director Pancho I. Perea at Tel/Fax No. 7218896 or 7210564 loc 24.

Defending their titles are the Rotary of Bagumbayan in the team competition and former basketball star Atoy Co in individual play.

RACING TIPS

AT SAN LAZARO BY MR. 999

Race 1--1. Korek Ka Dyan 2. Miss Monroe 3. Imperial Act
Race 2--1. Top Star 2. Private Pedro 3. Dennis D Menace 4. Festive Charm 5. Uncle Buck
Race 3--1. Secen Stealer 2. Real Piker Master 3. Courage Heart
Race 4--1. Miss Anapat 2. Patikim 3. Proud Conquistador 4. Desert Dob
Race 5--1. King Asa 2. Bulacan Boss 3. Golden Snakehotdog 4. E Mail 5. Hurricane Doding
Race 6--1. Love Triangle/The Mailman 2. Gallop for Gold 3. Septembermorn
Race 7--1. Classic Model 2. Don Benito 3. D Barrister 4. Jhelen 5. Premiere Event 6. Rain Check/Cool Zam
Race 8--1. Savvy Lad 2. Montpellier/King Size 3. Cavite Starlet
Race 9--1. Dedicated 2. Star of Arabia 3. Wild Guess 4. Sound N Rhythm 5. Passionately
Race 10--1. Stock Rising 2. Moore Magic 3. Gold Marlin
Race 11--1. La Signorina 2. Hezabellagio 3. Letshaveaparty 4. Wing Commander 5. Play the Field 6. Friendly Venture
Race 12--1. Jamie's Princess 2. Winning Prize 3. Standing Ovation 4. Trick Shot 5. Carlo's Charm
Race 13--1. Night Flight 2. Enseguida/Night Flight 3. Spoiler
Race 14--1. Replica 2. Modern Classic 3. Windlass 4. Diabolo Don 5. Prickly Heat 6. Golden Disc

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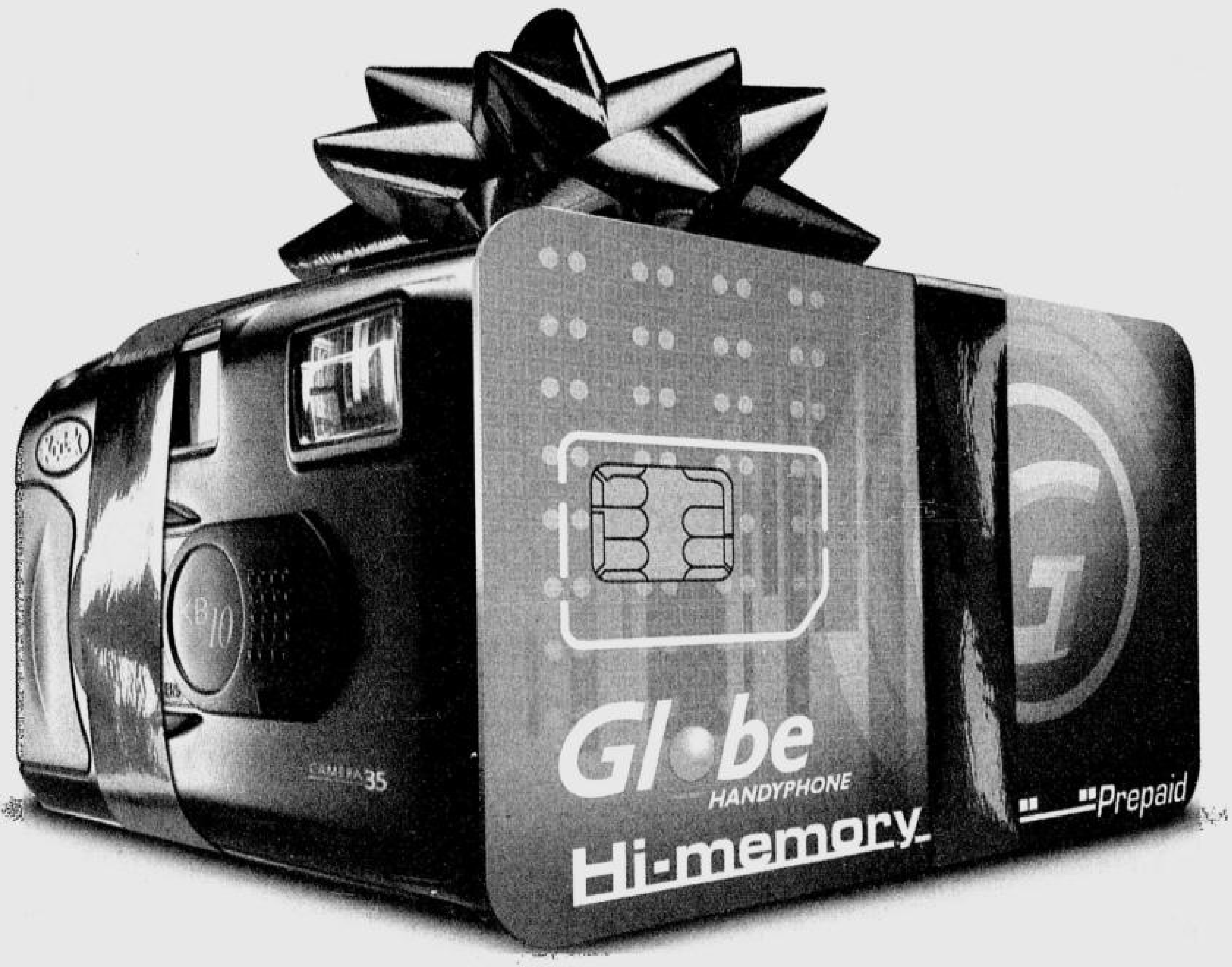

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1. Buy any Globe Prepaid SIM pack at any dealer or GT Business Center nationwide.

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2. Activate your Globe Prepaid SIM by making a first chargeable call within the promo period. You will receive a text message with promo information from 2977 the day after you make your first chargeable call.
3. Text in REG<space>name<space>address to 2994 to join the promo. You will then be assigned one (1) electronic raffle entry number. Every Globe Prepaid SIM activated within the promo period that texts in to 2994 will receive only one (1) raffle entry number.
4. Every text message sent to 2994 will only be charged ₱1.00.
5. Globe will give away Kodak KB10 camera packages (with 1 box Kodak Max Exp 24-shot film and 2 pcs. AA battery) and Kodak Max HQ One-Time Use (24-shot) cameras daily. Prizes are not convertible to cash.
6. From the database of raffle entries, Globe will then randomly draw 1,000 winners of Kodak cameras daily thru an electronic randomizer. All subscribers who have activated within the promo period and have registered thru 2994 will be included in the raffle.
7. Daily draws will be held Mondays through Fridays (except Saturdays, Sundays & holidays) starting November 18, 2002 to January 15, 2003* every 4 p.m. at 4/F Globe Telecom Plaza Tower 2, corner Pioneer and Madison Streets, Mandaluyong City. Activations made after 12 m.n. will be included in the following draw date. If a draw date falls on a holiday, the draw will be conducted on the next working day.
8. A participant can win only once during the promo period. If a name is drawn more than once, he/she will receive the bigger prize.
9. The winning raffle entry for the daily draw is disqualified from the succeeding daily draws.
10. Winners will be informed via text broadcast from Globe Infocast: 2977 if they won in the daily draw.
11. Winners can claim prize by presenting their text coupon from 2977 at any of the participating Kodak Express/ Kameraworld/ Island Photo outlets nationwide. Globe and Kodak will conduct further validation and verification before awarding the prize.
12. Winners who do not claim their prize within 14 days of winning text notification from Globe Infocast: 2977 will receive registered mail from Globe Telecom, informing them that they have won.
13. Redemption of prizes shall be within sixty (60) days from receipt of the registered mail. If the prize is not claimed within sixty (60) days from notification by registered mail, the prize shall be forfeited in favor of Globe Telecom with prior approval of DTI. Redemption period starts on November 21, 2002.
14. Employees of Globe Telecom, Kodak Philippines, Harrison Communications, Inc., Ogilvy and Mather Philippines, and participating outlets, including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.
15. Subscribers of Touch Mobile are not included in the promotion.

❄ How to win ₱350,000!*

1. All new Globe Prepaid Subscribers who made their first call within the promo period are also entitled to join the "CAPTURE A Ⓖ MOMENT" promo.
2. Take a picture that captures a special moment with your family, friends and your Globe Handyphone. It can be funny, crazy or heartwarming.
3. Write your name, address, Globe Handyphone number, signature and the Ⓖ moment at the back of your photo. Size of photo should be 4R and should be developed using Kodak paper. The Ⓖ moment is a word or phrase that defines your special moment with Globe. Entries must be original, i.e. never made public in any form, derived from any medium nor submitted simultaneously for other competitions. The winning entry will become a property of Globe Telecom.

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0917 901

4. Place your entry inside a white legal envelope and mail to: "Capture a Ⓖ moment Promo" c/o Harrison Communications, Inc., 4/F First Life Bldg, Salcedo St., Legazpi Village, Makati City.
5. Only entries received on or before January 15, 2003* will be qualified to join the contest.
6. Judging will be on January 17, 2003*, 4 p.m. at the Harrison Communications office.
7. Criteria for judging are:
   - a. Creativity 25% – use of Globe Handyphone in an imaginative/creative way
   - b. Uniqueness of moment 25% – capturing a special moment of human connection
   - c. Emotional Content 25% – portrays an inspiring/ moving emotion
   - d. Ⓖ moment 25% – word/ phrase that defines your special moment with Globe
8. One winner of ₱350,000* (tax-free) will be chosen by Globe representatives and will be notified via a call through his/her Globe Handyphone to give information on how to claim the prize. In case he/she cannot be contacted by phone, he/she will be notified through registered mail.
9. Winner can claim prize, within sixty (60) days from notification by registered mail, at 4/F Globe Telecom Plaza Tower 2, corner Pioneer and Madison Streets, Mandaluyong City, upon presentation of a valid I.D.
10. Employees of Globe Telecom, Kodak Philippines, Harrison Communications, Inc., Ogilvy and Mather Philippines and participating outlets, including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.

See flyers for details

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2291, Series of 2002.
*Approved by DTI-NCR

Graft charges hound Malabon mayor anew /A18

METRO
E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Louie C. Camino

Former wife sues noted dermatologist /A18

Just another job, Maganto says of Baron slay probe

By Leila B. Salaverria

CHIEF Supt. Romeo Maganto said he is not bringing any personal vendetta in his new job as head of the task force assigned to go after fugitive cop Supt. Rafael Cardeño, main suspect in the slaying of Young Officers Union spokesperson Baron Cervantes.

"I'm doing this job as my duty to the Cervantes family and as a symbol of justice," he said in a phone interview yesterday.

Maganto, who got his first assignment in almost two years upon the Cervantes family's request, told the INQUIRER that his role in Cervantes' case is over once Cardeño turns himself in. He has recommended the immediate dissolution of the task force when Cardeño surrenders, he said.

"I'm even willing to return to a floating status," he said. "Of course, that's up to the officials. But I have been in that status since 2001, and I suspect there are still some parties who want me to remain like that."

Maganto is one of the few police generals in active service who did not graduate from the PMA. He suspects that this has led to the lack of assignments coming his way.

The Cervantes family asked the President to let Maganto look for Cardeño after expressing dismay at the Philippine National Police's alleged reluctance to arrest one of their own.

Maganto has been credited with catching convicted killer Rolito Go who had escaped from prison.

Maganto said Cardeño would turn himself in on or before the January 15 trial date.

Yesterday, the police general hailed Cardeño's intention to surrender as a positive move.

"If he is innocent, then he should submit himself (to the authorities) to refute the allegations. It's hard to defend yourself from the outside," Maganto said.

(OOPS! The head of yesterday's story on Cardeño should have read: "Baron slay main suspect giving up." We regret the error. —Eds)

NBI, China cops going after shabu lab ring

By Jerome Aning

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation has contacted the Chinese police to track down members of a Hongkong-based drug ring that ran the shabu laboratories recently raided by Philippine authorities in Metro Manila.

NBI director Reynaldo Wycoco told reporters the other day that he has contacted police attachés at the Chinese Embassy to formally present his request for assistance.

The bureau specifically wants to learn the whereabouts of ring leaders Wang Yashi and Deng Xiaoli.

Wycoco said the NBI is anxious that other gang leaders might catch up with Wang and Deng and have them liquidated to prevent the duo from divulging the operations of the drug ring.

Wang and Deng are believed to be behind the operation of two shabu laboratories in Valenzuela City and Navotas that police raided last month.

Some P2 billion-worth of shabu, shabu ingredients, and equipment were seized in the operation.

The NBI and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency raided the third laboratory, a two-story townhouse, in New Manila, Quezon City on Friday.

The house, owned by one Randy Chua, was used as storage and repacking area by the syndicate, according to Wycoco.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco sifts through evidences seized during raid on a shabu refinery in New Manila, Quezon City. JOAN BONDOC

All-out hunt for lab point man

By Alcuin Papa

ONE of the three owners of a shabu laboratory raided by police in Quezon City on Friday is now the subject of a nationwide manhunt.

Chief Insp. Rodolfo Jaraza, chief of the Central Police District Intelligence Unit, said yesterday that his unit is now sweeping the metropolis for Randy Chua.

Chua, who are in cahoots with Chinese Wang Yashi and Deng Xiaoli, ran the shabu laboratory raided by the NBI at a townhouse on 6-F Sobrepena St., Barangay Damayang Lagi, Quezon City.

The three suspects also own the shabu warehouse which burned down

ALL-OUT/A18

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Former wife sues noted dermatologist

By Leila B. Salaverria

NOTED dermatologist Vinson Pineda has been accused of injuring his ex-wife and of forcibly taking their daughter.

Maria Aurora M. Dee, 53, of Valle Verde in Pasig, went to Makati police on Friday to report the incident.

PINEDA

Dee said her marriage to Pineda, 66, had been annulled.

She told police that she and her daughter Rachel Verone were at the Chin Ron Sea Food King Restaurant on Arnaiz Avenue in Makati when Pineda arrived and forcibly took their daughter at about 7 p.m. on Thursday night.

She said she tried to stop Pineda from taking their daughter, but the dermatologist pushed and pulled her.

She suffered a sprained ankle due to the struggle, Dee said.

Pineda owns a chain of dermatology clinics and has his own line of skin care products. Among his patients are celebrities and socialites.

Pineda's other daughter Angela, 14, was kidnapped in November 2001 by four armed men in police uniforms while she and her two siblings where on their way to school.

Angela was released a month later after ransom was supposedly paid to the abductors.

Police had said Angela was abducted by a kidnap-for-ransom syndicate that operated in Metro Manila.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, January 5, 2003
Feast of the Epiphany

1st Reading: **Is 60:1-6**

Arise, shine, for your light has come. The Glory of Yahweh rises upon you. Night still covers the earth and gloomy clouds veil the peoples, but Yahweh now rises and over you his glory appears. Nations will come to your light and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Lift up your eyes round about and see: they are all gathered and come to you together, your sons from afar, your daughters tenderly carried.

This sight will make your face radiant, your heart throbbing and full; the riches of the sea will be turned to you, the wealth of the nations will come to you. A flood of camels will cover you, caravans from Midian and Ephah. Those from Sheba will come, bringing with them gold and incense, all singing in praise of Yahweh.

2nd Reading: **Eph 3:2-3, 5-6**

You may have heard of the graces God bestowed on me for your sake. By a revelation he gave me the knowledge of his mysterious design, as I have explained in a few words.

This mystery was not made known to past generations but only now, through revelations given to holy apostles and prophets. Now the non-Jewish people share the Inheritance; in Christ Jesus the non-Jews are incorporated and are to enjoy the Promise.

Gospel: **Mt 2:1-12**

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in Judea, during the days of King Herod, wise men from the east arrived in Jerusalem. They asked, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw the rising of his star in the east and have come to honor him."

When Herod heard this he was greatly disturbed and with him all Jerusalem. He immediately called a meeting of all high-ranking priests and those who taught the people of God his Law, and asked them where the Messiah was to be born.

In the town of Bethlehem in Judea, they told him, for this is what the prophet wrote: And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, you are by no means the least among the clans of Judah, for from you will come a leader, the one who is to shepherd my people Israel.

Then Herod secretly called the wise men and asked them the precise time the star appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem with the instruction, "Go and get precise information about the child. As soon as you have found him, report to me, so that I too may go and honor him."

After the meeting with the king, they set out. The star that they had seen in the East went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. The wise men were overjoyed on seeing the star again. They went into the house and when they saw the child with Mary his mother, they knelt and worshipped him. They opened their bags and offered him their gifts of gold, incense and myrrh.

In a dream they were warned not to go back to Herod, so they returned to their home country by another way.

Commentary

The Magi, Matthew tells us, returned home "by another way." In a sense, this single verse might be the most important message of the Christmas season, which reaches a kind of peak with this feast of the Epiphany. Literally, of course, the "other way" the wise men take simply means that they found an alternative route to avoid passing through Herod's territory. But the "other way" might also mean that they return home from the encounter with the child transformed. After meeting this baby who is King (gold) and God (frankincense), yet destined to die (myrrh), they could not return to "business as usual," and had to walk another way, that is, live their lives differently than before. Should not this be our experience of Christmas too? It is not enough that we have had seasonal feelings of good will that we then pack away with the ornaments, the lights, the trees, and the stars that we take down at season's end. Every true encounter with the Child who is the light of the world, who is the true Star of Bethlehem, lights up new ways we are invited to live and love. This feast of Epiphany or "Revelation" is a good time to reflect on the newness our celebration of Christmas has revealed to us.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

LEGAL ETHICS—Lawyer owes fidelity to the cause of his client—A lawyer owes fidelity to the cause of his client. He should be mindful of the trust and confidence in him, remembering always that his actions or omissions are binding on his clients. In this case, the failure of respondent to file the appellant's brief resulted in the dismissal of the appeal. As a consequence, the decision in the trial court finding complaint guilt of homicide became final and executory and he was sentenced to imprisonment. An attorney is bound to protect his client's interest to the best of his ability and with utmost diligence. A failure to file brief for his client certainly constitutes reasonable negligence on his part. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Mendoza, Second Division, Rabanal v. Tugade, A.C. No. 1372, June 27, 2002]

DIGEST BY R. B. VERA

SOLITARY, SOLEMN

All the madness and the merrymaking during the holidays have obviously caught up with this city dweller who tries to regain his wits with a solemn, solitary nap by the Manila Bay seawall. Nothing could be better to cure the monumental hangover.

ERIK ARAZAS

MMDA traffic man lands in jail with brod-in-law

By Leila B. Salaverria

TRAFFIC enforcer Elcid L. Cablayan is in hot water after he was caught extorting money from a driver on Friday during an entrapment operation.

To make things worse, his brother-in-law Manuel B. Tejada was also arrested for trying to buy Cablayan's freedom, police said.

Cablayan, an employee of the Metro Manila Development Authority, was accused of extorting P1,000 from driver Rogelio D. Tulagan on December 28 in Cubao, Quezon City, police said.

Tulagan told police that Cablayan accosted him for an illegal transfer of a sticker on his white Tamaraw FX and demanded.

Tulagan sought the assistance of MMDA personnel and Makati police who arrested the traffic enforcer on Friday afternoon in front of the MMDA office in Makati.

Police said a marked P1,000 bill was found on Cablayan.

He was then brought to the police headquarters where Tejada, his brother-in-law, tried to bribe authorities to release Cablayan, police said.

PO3 Alexander Acosta, who is assigned to the Quezon City Hall and who was involved in Cablayan's arrest, said that he had just gone out of the headquarters when he came across Tejada.

He said Tejada introduced himself as Cablayan's brother-in-law, handed him a P1,000 bill and asked him if police could free Cablayan.

Acosta said he refused the money and reported the bribery attempt to Makati police who then arrested Tejada for bribery.

Tejada later joined his brod-in-law in jail.

Graft charges hound Malabon mayor anew

By Tina Santos

MALABON City Mayor Amado Vicencio, who had just returned to office after a three-month preventive suspension for graft charges, could face similar administrative sanction on charges of dishonesty and abuse of authority, among other charges.

Opposition councilors Edilberto Torres, Chiqui Roque-Villaroel, Payapa Ona and Venancio Sevilla filed the charges of abuse of authority, dishonesty, misconduct in office and gross negligence in connection with the alleged anomalous acquisition of 12 hectares of land in Barangay Tanza, Navotas before the Office of the President.

The land worth P88.9 million is owned by Jun-Jun Fishing Corporation, which has an existing 25-year lease agreement with Siochi Fishery Enterprises Inc.

The INQUIRER tried to reach Vicencio for comment but he was unavailable.

Torres alleged that Vicencio entered into a memorandum of agreement with Jun-Jun Fishing Corporation to buy the property and paid a P12.6 million down payment without approval of the city council.

He said that under the MOA, the lot was valued at P700 per square meter, which Vicencio had claimed was lower than the zonal valuation made by the Bureau of Internal Revenue for similar properties in Metro Manila.

Torres added that Jun-Jun Fishing Corporation had sold another piece of property adjacent to the lot in question for only P320 per square meter.

The councilor said that Vicencio had committed dishonesty when he pegged the price of the lot at P700, which is almost double the applicable zonal valuation.

He said the mayor committed grave abuse of authority when he affected the P12.6 million down payment under the MOA.

But city hall insiders came to the Vicencio's defense saying that the new charges against the mayor was politically motivated.

They refused to elaborate.

Torres said Vicencio, whose suspension in September stemmed from his alleged anomalous awarding of a contract for the shelved P122-million city hall building to an alleged unqualified contractor, must first be placed under preventive suspension while the new charges are being investigated by the Office of the President.

In a one-page order, a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER, Deputy Executive Secretary Arthur Autea directed Vicencio to submit his verified answer within 15 days upon receipt of the order.

Torres said in his complaint that "the MOA was not even bearing the signature of the Chief Accountant."

He said the mayor committed misconduct in office "because instead of protecting the best interest of the city and its taxpayers, he committed and disbursed the city's public funds to a clearly and grossly disadvantageous contract against the best interest of public service."

All-out hunt . . .

From page A17

last Dec. 9 in Lawang Bato, Valenzuela. Around P3 billion worth of shabu was found and recovered by police.

Wang Yashi managed to slip out of the country last Dec. 9, Deng Xiaoli flew off a day later. Both are suspected to be in Mainland China.

Jaraza said they have managed to get a hold departure order from the Bureau of Immigration for Chua to prevent him from slipping out of the country.

In the Quezon City raid, police recovered a green Honda CRV which police said the suspects used to elude arrest just after the fire in Valenzuela. Jaraza said the vehicle was registered under the name of Chua.

Jaraza is also verifying if the townhouse was bought or rented by Chua so it could be subjected to forfeiture proceedings in court.

"It seems that Wang Yashi and Deng Xiaoli shuttle from China to the Philippines, supervising the labs they have here. Chua is their local operator and moves from one place to another in Metro Manila," said Jaraza.

He added that he and his men are coordinating with Atty. Raul Lasala, chief of the NBI's Narcotics Division, and the PDEA to hunt down Chua and to take down the other shabu laboratories that he might have in Metro Manila.

The shabu lab raided the other day is said to be a distribution point of the trio, said to be members of the Chinese Triad gang. Police said the group distributes shabu around Metro Manila as well as periphery areas from Bulacan to Cavite.

The shabu warehouse in Valenzuela, police said, is their production point.

METROBRIEFS

Killed in Quezon City

DRIVER Gonzalo Abagon, 50, was killed, while Carmen Moje, 63, was injured when three men on board a motorcycle ambushed them on Friday in Quezon City. Police said Abagon was driving a white Suzuki Esteem with Moje as passenger when two men on board a Yamaha motorcycle pulled up alongside the vehicle and fired at them. The suspects caught up with the victims and shot at them at the corner of Congressional Avenue and Visayas Avenue, Barangay Culiat, Quezon City, police said. When the car stopped, the suspects grabbed Moje's handbag containing P2000 and sped away. Police identified one of the suspects as Jose Tactacon, alias Jojo, 45, of 39 Rebueno St., Philamlife Village, Pamplona, Las Piñas City.

Abagon died from a gunshot wound in the left shoulder while being rushed to the hospital. Moje is is now confined at the UERM Hospital with a gunshot wound in the foot.

Alcuin Papa

Cuckold in Caloocan

NAPAKASAKIT !!!

MISFORTUNE hounded construction worker Gerald de Guzman, 33, on Friday night in Caloocan City: he caught his wife Marites, 28, in a tryst with Pablo Tapit, 35, who in turn beat him up severely. De Guzman, of Araceta Street, Malabon, suffered head and body injuries after Tapit, of Julian Felipe Street, Caloocan, attacked him with a lead pipe, police said. Both men are now detained at police headquarters. Police said De Guzman caught his wife Marites with Tapit at about 10 p.m. inside the house of a certain Manny on Daang-Bakal Street in Caloocan and was enraged. But before he could do anything, Tapit attacked him with a lead pipe, hitting him in different parts of the body.

Police said De Guzman has also filed adultery charges against his wife Marites and Tapit.

Tina Santos

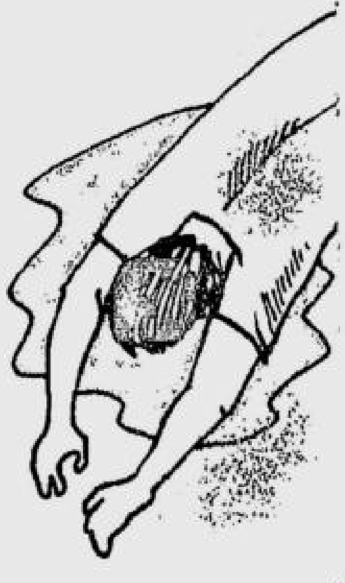
Slain in Port Area

RENATO A. Sosas, 22, was walking in front of a billiard hall in the Port Area, Manila when unidentified men shot him to death on Thursday night. Sosas, of Baseco Compound, Port Area, suffered gunshot wounds in the face, chest and palm, police said.

The victim was walking in front of a billiard hall along the seawall at 7:30 p.m. when shots were fired at him, witnesses told police. They said that they next saw Sosa sprawled on the ground and bloodied. No one among the witnesses had seen the assailants, police said.

Philip Tubeza

Killed in Commonwealth



BARANGAY tanod Romeo Alduya, 38, of Barangay Commonwealth, Quezon City was allegedly shot dead last Wednesday by a fellow barangay tanod Celso Lucero, of 3 Kasunduan St., over the barangay politics in their area. Police said the shooting happened at 8:30 p.m. along Kasuduan Street after Lucero was upset over Alduya for wanting to impeach a purok leader in the barangay. The victim was talking to some residents in the area at the time of the shooting. Alduya was supposedly consulting with residents regarding the purok leader's alleged selling of firecrackers in their area when Lucero charged at him and shot him with an improvised handgun. Police said that Lucero fled after the shooting.

Alcuin Papa

Stabbed dead in Caloocan

POLICE are now hunting down Roberto Lamier after he allegedly stabbed dead his girlfriend Violeta Glanan, 32, of Caloocan City last Wednesday. Police said the victim's body was found by her neighbor Michael Buere on a sidewalk on Samson Road. She was last seen having an argument with Lamier outside her house. Lamier was heard threatening to kill her, police said.

Tina Santos

Ogie Alcasid performs in Tagaytay

SINGER-SONGWRITER Ogie Alcasid will take center stage at Casino Filipino in Tagaytay, Jan. 11.

Ogie will perform with MTV's best female artist, Victoria and the newest boy band to hit the music scene, Casanova, as guest performers with Tats Faustino as musical director. The concert entitled "A Better Man: Live" is expected to cater to the young and the young at heart. It will surely be a night to remember for the Batangueños since it will be the first time in many years that Ogie, himself a Batangueño, will perform for his home town.

The show is produced by Events and Shows Inc., with Casino Filipino Tagaytay.

Ogie is known for such hits as "Dahil Mahal Kita," "Nandito Ako," "Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang" and countless other ballads. His performance is always a standout in international and local venues.

"A Better Man: Live" is also presented by Sunshine Hotel Tagaytay, Air Philippines, Ford Philippines, Citylite 88.3, McDonald's Tagaytay and supported by Calebs Soul and Pepper Place, Marekho Corp., Alert General Services, Yakal Security Agency, Double M Construction.

Tickets are available at all SM Ticketnet outlets, Casino Filipino Tagaytay Concierge Section, Sunrise Hotel Tagaytay, McDonald's Tagaytay and at Calebs Soul and Pepper Place Ortigas, Pasig.

For inquiries and reservations, call Events and Shows, Inc. at 635-3790/ 688-4404/ 705-1751 or 0916-5314058/ 0917-4495343 or Casino Filipino Tagaytay (046) 413-1103.

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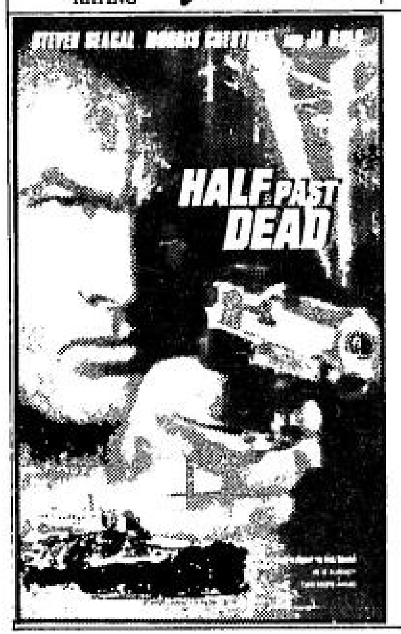
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Special New Year Presentation!
Steven Seagal back in Action
International action superstar Steven Seagal is back with a vengeance. This time he plays undercover FBI agent Sascha Petrosevitch in the brand-new non-stop, slam-bang action blockbuster from Columbia Pictures, "Half Past Dead."
The California Penal Authority has reopened Alcatraz, the most notorious prison in history. A disgruntled prison bureaucrat-turned-criminal mastermind heads a renegade commando team to infiltrate the high-tech fortress in order to force a death-row inmate to reveal the whereabouts of $200 million worth of gold.
Seagal teams with rap artist Ja Rule to rally the Alcatraz inmates to stop the invaders – before they murder the Supreme Court Justice, who is in The Rock to witness an execution.
The fast-paced, action-packed thriller also stars sexy Filipino Hollywood actress Nia Peeples as a deadly gun-firing, knife-throwing martial artist.
OPENS JANUARY 11

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Columnist, PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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Vice-President, Philippine Movie Press Club
"Magnificent movie! Very true to the period! Every Filipino should see it."
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"It's a very good adaptation of the novel and it does not succumb to the usual melodrama. It's an important film and one of the best films this year."
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"Chito Roño is masterful in this movie!"
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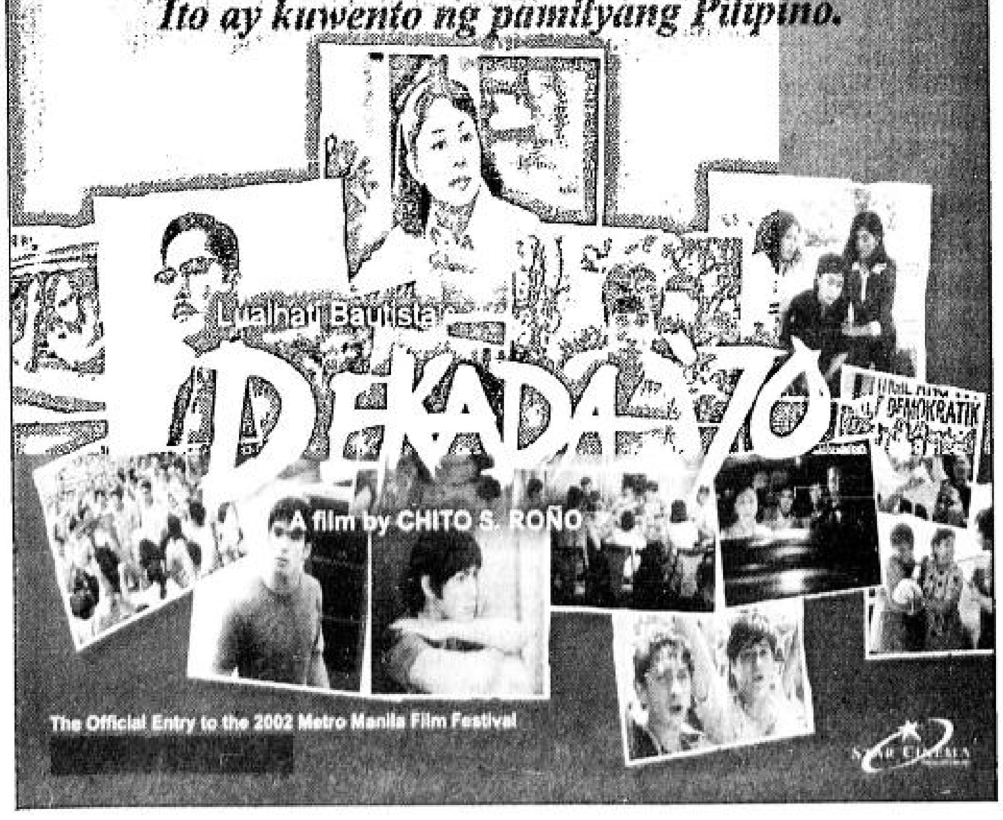
Ito ay kuwento ng pamilyang Pilipino.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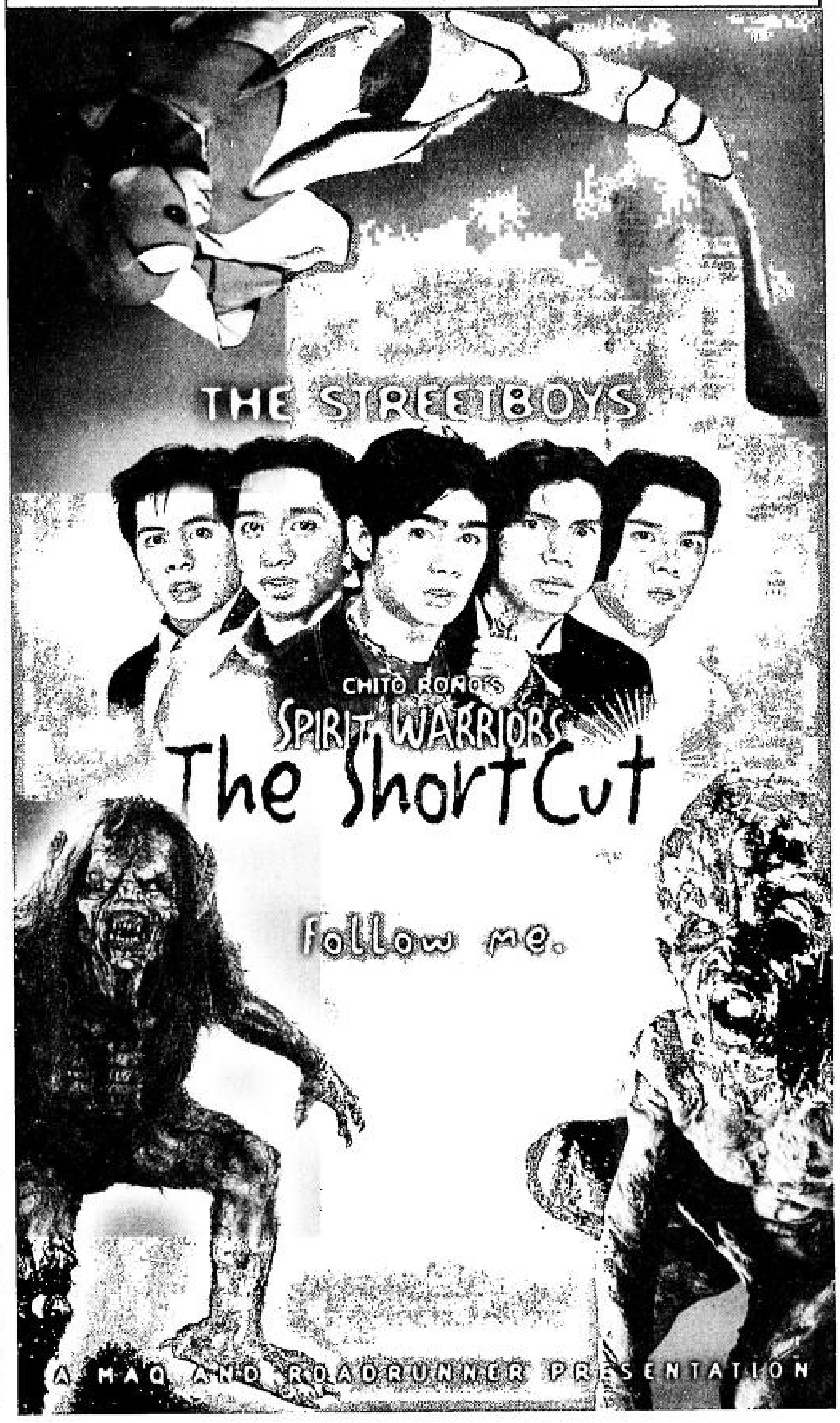

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DAVID ANSEN, NEWSWEEK

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MIRAMAR	TWO TIMER/SEX FILES
ODEON	LASTIKMAN
ODEON-2	PROSTI/ HIYAS NG PARAISO
ROBEN	SPIRIT WARRIORS
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	KILABOT AT KEMBOT, RED DIARY
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET-2	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
QUEZON-1	LASTIKMAN
REMAR	LASTIKMAN
REMAR-2	AGIMAT
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	HOME ALONE DA RIBER
B	HULA MO, HULI KO
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-2	REPLIKATE
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	HULA MO, HULI KO
CINEMA-2	HOME ALONG DA RIBER
CINEMA-3	ALAMAT NG LAWIN
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LASTIKMAN
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	AGIMAT NI LOLO
CINEMA-6	MANO PO
CINEMA-7	SPIRIT WARRIOR 2
CINEMA-8	LAPU LAPU
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	LASTIKMAN
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MANO PO
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	AGIMAT NI LOLO
CINEMA-12	SPIRIT WARRIOR 2
CINEMA-14	HOME ALONG DA RIBER
CINEMA-15	DEKADA 70
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHO
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANGING LANES
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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1 DEKADA '70	1 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2	1 LASTIKMAN	DEKADA '70 12:40, 3:20, 6:00, 8:40, 11:20	1 MANO PO
2 LASTIKMAN	2 LASTIKMAN	2 MANO PO	MANO PO 12:40, 3:20, 6:00, 8:40, 11:20	2 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
3 ANG AGIMAT	DEKADA '70 12:10, 2:45, 5:20, 7:55, 10:30	Onstage JOSE MARI CHAN - HEART OF A SONG WRITER Jan. 17 - 18 / 9PM	LASTIKMAN 10:50, 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20	3 DEKADA '70
4 MANO PO	4 ANG ALAMAT NG LAWIN		ANG AGIMAT 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:25, 11:30	4 AGIMAT
	5 ANG AGIMAT		SPIRIT WARRIORS 2 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30	5 LASTIKMAN
	6 MANO PO			
	7 HOME ALONE DA RIBER			

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4 GOLD (DTS/SDS) MANO PO
5 GOLD (DOLBY EX) ALAMAT NG LAWIN
6 (DTS) SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
7 GOLD (DOLBY EX) LASTIKMAN
8 LASTIKMAN
9 DEKADA '70
10 HOME ALONG D RIVER

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1 LASTIKMAN
2 HOME ALONG D RIVER
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3 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT

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2 MANO PO
3 AGIMAT
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) ALAMAT NG LAWIN
5 LASTIKMAN

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1 HULI MO HULI KO
2 HOME ALONG D RIVER
3 LASTIKMAN
4 AGIMAT
5 ALAMAT NG LAWIN
6 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT

M star
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1 LASTIKMAN
2 MANO PO

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(Makati City) tel 751.2010 to13

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2 AGIMAT

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1 LASTIKMAN
2 AGIMAT
3 MANO PO

Sunshine
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2 AGIMAT
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4 MANI PO

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4 HULA MO HULI KO
5 AGIMAT
6 DEKADA '70
7 (DTS) LASTIKMAN
8 (SDDS) HOME ALONG
9 (D) SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

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2 LASTIKMAN
3 HOME ALONG D RIBER
4 (SDDS) DEKADA '70
5 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
6 (DOLBY) LASTIKMAN
7 (DTS) MANO PO
8 HULI MO HULI KO
9 ALAMAT NG LAWIN

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2 (SDDS) AGIMAT
3 (D) SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
4 (DOLBY) LASTIKMAN
5 ALAMAT NG LAWIN

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1 LASTIKMAN
2 DEKADA '70
3 (DTS) HOME ALONG D RIVER
4 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
5 (SDDS) ALAMAT NG LAWIN

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2 MANO PO
3 HOME ALONG D RIVER
4 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

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2 MANO PO
3 LASTIKMAN
4 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
5 ALAMAT NG LAWIN

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2 HOME ALONG D' RIBER

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2 AGIMAT
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL) MANO PO
4 (SDDS) LASTIKMAN
5 (DTS) DEKADA '70
6 ALAMAT NG LAWIN
7 HOME ALONF DA RIBER

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1 LASTIKMAN
2 AGIMAT

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1 LASTIKMAN
2 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT
3 (DTS) MANO PO

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1 MANO PO
2 (DTS) LASTIKMAN
3 (DOLBY) DEKADA '70
4 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

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1 MANO PO
2 (DOLBY) AGIMAT
3 (DTS) SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORCUT
4 LASTIKMAN

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2 LASTIKMAN
3 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
4 RESERVE

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2 LASTIKMAN
3 (DOLBY) AGIMAT
4 (DTS) MANO PO

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2 (DTS) LASTIKMAN
3 MANO PO

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2 AGIMAT
3 (DTS) ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4 LASTIKMAN

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1 (DOLBY) HOME ALONG D RIBER
2 AGIMAT
3 (DTS) LASTIKMAN
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5 HULI MO HULI KO

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2 LASTIKMAN
3 HOME ALONG D RIBER

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2 LASTIKMAN
3 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

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2 DEKADA '70
3 (DTS) ALAMAT NG LAWIN
4 (DOLBY) AGIMAT

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2 (DTS) LASTIKMAN

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2 LASTIKMAN
3 MANO PO

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1 MANO PO
2 AGIMAT
3 DEKADA '70
4 ALAMAT NG LAWIN

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2 MANO PO
3 (DTS-ES) DEKADA '70
4 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORTCUT

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2 MANO PO
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10 LAPU LAPU
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11 DEKADA '70
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SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
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2 LASTIKMAN
3 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
4 MANO PO

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2 LASTIKMAN
3 MANO PO
4 AGIMAT

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2 HOME ALONE DA RIBER
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4 DEKADA '70
5 LASTIKMAN
6 AGIMAT

SM BICUTAN

1 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
2 MANO PO
3 LASTIKMAN
4 AGIMAT

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2 LASTIKMAN
3 MANO PO
4 HOME ALONE DA RIBER

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3 DEKADA '70
4 AGIMAT
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4 MANO PO
5 HOME ALONG THE RIBER
6 AGIMAT

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2 LASTIKMAN
3 SPIRIT WARRIORS
4 DEKADA '70
5 DIE ANOTHER DAY/HOME ALONG THE RIBER
6 MANO PO

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'Dekada '70' and 'Mano Po' compared

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

BEFORE the 2002 Metro filmfest opened last Dec. 25, it was generally conceded that the two leading contenders for awards were "Dekada '70" and "Mano Po." At the filmfest's awards night, however, "Mano Po" romped away with most of the major awards. But its triumph was questioned by some quarters. To settle the issue once and for all, let's see both films and make up our own minds.

For our part, we've gone out of our way to watch both movies, and we can compare them to each other, on point of relative quality:

First, let's agree that "Mano Po" has some good things going for it. Its subject matter, the Chinese presence in the Philippines, is an important one, and the film should be praised for tackling it.

Unfortunately, its scope is too limited, concentrating mostly on its undercover agent and kidnapping aspects. Still, its occasional emphasis on Chinese traditions and some exceptional performances compensate to some extent for this limitation.

On the other hand, "Dekada '70" has an even more vital subject matter, the turbulent martial law years and their impact on the country's political life, and one middle-class family that gets personally affected by the evil that characterized that dark period.

More specifically, the life-changing experience of that decade had its strongest impact on the mother, played by **Vilma Santos**, who emerges as an emblem of all Filipino women, and their difficult journey from subservience and acquiescence to self-awareness, actualization and independence.

After carefully evaluating both movies, we conclude that "Dekada '70" is the better film, eminently worthy of the filmfest's best picture, best director (for **Chito Roño**), best screenplay (**Lualhati Bautista**) and best actress (Vilma Santos) awards. That the filmfest jurors thought otherwise doesn't diminish the film's achievement, which speaks for itself.

We really wish that viewers take a more personal interest in this controversy, make up their own minds, and verbalize their opinions. You see, if film people complain, they can always be accused of being sore losers. If reviewers take a stand, they can be suspected of subjectively favoring either one of the top contenders. But if viewers speak up, they can't be accused of having a hidden agenda. And if a clear majority of them favors one film, that can be taken as the collective voice of the movie audience, for whose benefit all of these "quality" films are supposed to have been made, in the first place.

A final word, this time on the Vilma Santos-**Ara Mina** competition in the filmfest's best actress category. When Ara was adjudged winner, we thought she should more properly have won in the best in supporting actress category. And when we saw "Dekada '70," we knew that Vilma fully deserved to win as best actress.

Ara's performance was outstanding, but Vilma's was in a league all its own, the sterling product not only of her talent, but also of her long experience as an actress. With her new maturity, she's even better than she was in most of her award-winning starrers, and all that Ara Mina needs to do is to watch Vilma in "Dekada '70" to concede that, although she did well in "Mano Po," Vilma has clearly outdistanced her in Chito Roño's film.

The Mummy Returns

AT 9 p.m. on Jan. 11, the HBO movie channel will screen "The Mummy Returns," starring **Brendan Fraser** and **Rachel Weisz.** Ten years after battling the revengeful incarnation of Egyptian priest Imothep, Rick O'Connel (Fraser) returns in a desperate attempt to save the world from unspeakable evil, and to rescue his young son.

Movies on TV

ON HBO, Sunday, Jan. 5 at 12 noon, "Billy Madison." Monday, Jan. 6, at 2 p.m., "Little Women." 10:30 p.m., "Chicken run." Tuesday, Jan. 7, 11 p.m., "The Tailor of Panama." 2:45 a.m., "Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kinder Transport."

Wednesday, Jan. 8 at 3:45 p.m., "Radio Murders." 9 p.m., "Interview with the Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles." Thursday, Jan. 9 at 12 noon, "Philadelphia." 5:30 p.m., "Fast Times at Ridgemont High."

On the Cinemax channel: Sunday, Jan. 5 at 8:15 a.m., "Two of Us." 12:45 p.m., "Stand and Deliver." 4 a.m., "Cinema Secrets: Creature Comfort." Monday, Jan. 6 at 8:15 a.m., "Pale Rider." Tuesday, Jan. 7 at 9:30 a.m., "Luv." 10:30 p.m., "Sleepy Hollow."

Wednesday, Jan. 8 at 12:10 p.m., "The Art of War." Thursday, Jan. 9 at 9 p.m., "Mercy Streets." 5:30 a.m., "Cinema Secrets: When in Rome."

Adventure questors

AT 8 p.m. from Jan. 7 to 28 on the National Geographic Channel, "Nat Geo Max" present features on some adventure questors: on Jan. 7, "Jim Shekhdar: Ocean Rower," on the first person to row across the Pacific solo and unassisted. Jan. 13, "Poison!," on people who have had near death encounters with nature's deadliest toxins. Jan. 14, "Simon and the Spirit Bear." Jan. 20, "Dingoes: Friends or Foes." Jan. 21, "The Nauticos Earheart Expedition." And Jan. 28, "Mountain Rescuers."

'Mano Po': A cheap take on Chinoy culture

From page A22

At best, "Mano Po" is a cheap take on the Chinoy culture—whatever that is—the movie failed to make me understand.

So I asked Teresita Ang-See, the feisty lady who speaks for the local Chinese community, to please explain to me the movie.

She says: "Mother Lily must be lauded for her bold move in bringing forth a movie that is truly a bridge between two cultures and two traditions.

"Mano Po" showed the many faces of the Chinoy, not just the stereotypical rich businessman who is forever the fence sitter, who prefers to be a bystander even in the face of pressing life and death problems, who's willing to save face even at such high costs.

Committed Chinoy

"It gave a face to the activist Chinoy, and there were many of them who joined the underground during the repressive martial law years; to the committed Chinoy who will give all to serve the only country they have ever known; the politically-conscious Chinoy who were in Edsa I and II.

"Though there were some contrived scenes that capitalized on the stereotypes—like the overuse of the cheongsam, which has seldom been worn by the masses in China in the new republic, except by people in the entertainment field, and in the design of the winter mandarin coat that remains popular (like the one given to PGMA); Ara Mina inconsistently wearing a cheongsam in the Congress hearing when all throughout the movie she was the symbol of breaking with tradition, etc.

"Eddie Garcia's breaking down at the death of his wife was so atypical, and especially the *beso-beso* in China is unheard of. The Chinese seldom show affection, and very rarely in public. The relatives should have made a slight bow, just an inclining of the head, as a sign of respect to the patriarch. But there can be no hugging, just as there never was hugging between him and his daughters and granddaughters—the distant, reticent, severe and unemotional patriarch image still prevails.

Grossly wrong

Eddie Garcia's wearing red to his own b-day was also grossly wrong."

Ms Ang-See adds: "The themes on the conflict between tradition and change and the search for identity were handled quite well and were quite realistic. Many Chinoys I asked said the events all found echoes, somehow, in their lives.

The message is really something that we want all Filipinos to realize—that like the pluralistic mainstream society, the Chinoy community is not homogeneous; it is also multifaceted and multi-layered. There are very poor Chinese just as there are very rich ones. They should not generalize.

"I am personally happy that the conflict over the abduction was handled well. What I wanted to hear was the perennial excuse "*Diao tsi siao chay.*" *Chay* is menace, *siao* is to brush away or erase and *diao tsi* is money wasted. But it didn't enter the dialogue. I always argue with the Chinese that the money wasted does not erase the menace but even add to it because one successful ransom payment breeds two more and so on.

Forgiveable

"I was invited to be language consultant but i just didn't have the time, the dialogue could have been done better if they had time.

"They rushed Jane Yugioksing (I recommended her) that there was no time to fine tune the translations.

"Overall, the lapses and stereotyping and pseudo Chinese scenes are forgivable and are small compared to the overall effect of the movie. "Maricel Soriano and Kris Aquino should be lauded for the efforts they spent in learning their lines. Even Eddie Garcia's is quite passable, and they're impressive in the efforts they put in to shine in the movie."

She would know better.

I am just a common tao, the kind that festival committee chair and Caloocan Mayor Rey Malonzo wants to sit on the board of jurors. But I would never have voted for "Mano Po" as the Best Movie this year or any other year.

Oyo Boy: My dad is my idol

From page A22

priority, I just could not pass up the opportunity to work with my dad in a movie. *Idol ko si dad,*" Oyo Boy said of his father.

"Lastikman" is the comeback film of Vic's M-Zet Productions and OctoArts Films, which is owned by Orly Ilacad. It has been three years since their first joint production venture, "D Sisters: Nuns of the Above," was shown. The comedy hit, like "Lastikman," failed to make it to the 1999 film festival's "Magic 7."

"But we now look at it as a blessing in disguise," said Ilacad.

"Lastikman" ranked 8th in this year's filmfest. But the movie became a huge box office hit when it started its theater run last Jan. 1, a week after all the other entries were shown.

Another film, "Spirit Warriors 2: Shortcut," was also shown on New Year's Day.

"Because it was shown a week later than the seven other entries, many theaters were able to accommodate it," Vic reasoned out.

"I've been receiving congratulatory calls from friends, who have been telling me how 'Lastikman' did exceptionally well at the box office, since it's first screening day," Vic declares.

Other members of the cast are MTV Asia VJ Donita Rose, Jeffrey Quizon and Michael V.

Donita plays Lastikman's love interest Linda, while Jeffrey is the hero's nemesis Stryker.

Michael V plays the pesky broadcaster Junie Lee, an adaptation of Chris Farley's character on NBC's "The Chris Farley Show."

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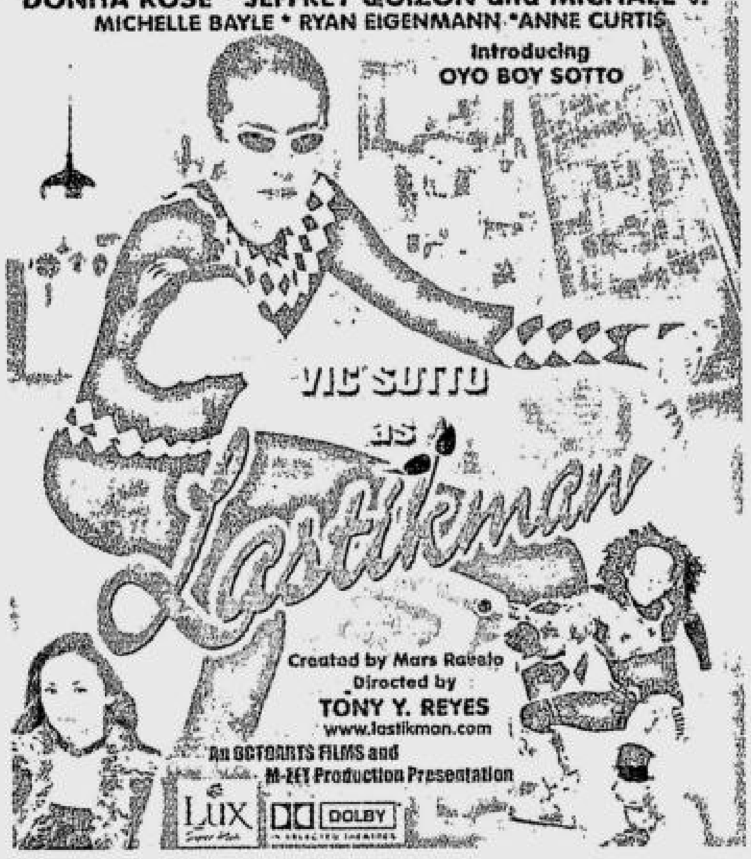

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'Mano Po': A cheap take on Chinoy culture

By Nini Valera

REVIEW

THE CHINESE, at least the ones with class, do not wear flashy cheongsams, especially during a congressional investigation of alleged drug activities of a police general.

The Chinese, when they celebrate their birthdays, do not wear red to the party, but choose more subdued colors.

The Chinese do not, repeat, DO NOT, do *beso-beso* (kiss air).

The Chinese do not show their emotions and do not have prolonged deathbed scenes.

The Chinese never show affection in public.

The Chinese do not kiss the hand of their elders or make *mano* to their parents and grandparents.

These are just some of the glaring mistakes in the movie "Mano Po" which supposedly takes us non-Chinese behind the grilled doors of a Chinese home to tell the story of a Filipino-Chinese family from the Chinese perspective.

Loopholes

Thanks to my Chinoy friends, these loopholes in the Chineseness of the characters in the movie were pointed out to me.

But I did not need to know these errors to decide that "Mano Po" did not deserve to win best picture, best direction, best story, best screenplay—a total of 12 bests—in the recent Metro Manila Film Festival.

That "Mano Po" bested Chito Rono's "Dekada '70, a sleeker and more lucid delineation of the life and times of a family has left me dazed and confused for two days after I watched "Mano Po."

But there are two "bests" in "Mano Po" that I agree with: Ara Mina as best actress and Kris Aquino as best supporting actress.

Ara because she surprised me with her acting, and Kris because she stunned me with the restraint in her acting.

The other "bests" would do best by returning their trophies to the festival committee, especially Roy Iglesias who wrote the screenplay and who shared credit for the story with Chinese movie matriarch Lily Monteverde.

The storyline is as thin as *papel de Hapon*, which tears if splattered even with just saliva, and the screenplay is shot full of holes that are wider than the gaping yawns brought by boredom.

The movie opens with a lovey-dovey Richard Gomez and Ara Mina talking to the camera, with Ara doing voice over narrative throughout the movie.

She begins with a scene from 1949 in the Fijian Province of China. A young man brings his half-Filipino, half-Chinese bride whom he met and fell in love with in the Philippines to the home of his parents in China.

At the dinner table, the man's parents scold their son for marrying a non-Chinese. They complain that she is just another mouth to feed. They talk about her in Chinese as if she did not exist. But she could sense their resentment, even if her husband tries to cover up his parents' hostility by assuring her that everything was fine.

What finally drives her away was when she suffers stomach pains and is forced by her mother-in-law to drink traditional medicine, which to her looked like poison. Her husband goes with her back to the Philippines where the couple eke out a living doing menial jobs—he as a cook in a *panciteria*, and she as a laundrywoman for her husband's boss.

Barely five years later, the couple has two children and a thriving business in trading.

Cut to the present and the young man is now a graying and stooped Eddie Garcia, and the young bride is Boots Anson-Roa aged by make-up.

Family and friends are gathered to celebrate the 80th birthday of the patriarch, who is clad in a red Chinese jacket.

Perfect show

The present head of the business empire he has built is a stony-faced Maricel Soriano, eldest daughter of the patriarch's only son played by Tirso Cruz III.

The rest of the characters—Kris Aquino, Amy Austria, Gina Alajar, Eric Quizon—are seated at the presidential table, clapping and smiling dutifully while speeches are said and toasts are drank.

To ruin the perfect show of filial piety, Ara Mina, the black sheep of the clan, makes a grand and scandalous entrance at the reception with a Chinoy that her relatives disapprove off.

Dressed in a tight-fitting red gown cut low in the back and barely covering her crack, she strides to the stage where the patriarch and his wife are seated, gives him her present of porno videos, and generally makes the jaws of her sisters, parents and the guests drop to the floor.

Ara's character plunges into the depths of sin and destruction to rebound in eventual redemption. She's busted during a drug session, is recruited to be a civilian agent by drug cop Richard Gomez as her handler, infiltrates a Hong Kong triad, and falls in love with the Gomez character to the horror of her family.

Real-life melodrama

Eventually, she testifies before a congressional investigation of the police general who is her family's protector but is alleged to have ties with the drug lords of Hong Kong.

If by now you still have not guessed that Ara and Richard are Mary Ong and the late, lamented vice cop John Campos, then you must have been unconscious when this real-life melodrama unfolded on primetime TV and made newspaper headlines.

But a movie about the Filipino-Chinese would not be complete without the requisite kidnap-for-ransom experience. So Ara and Kris, who plays her spineless sister in the movie, are kidnapped then rescued by Richard.

During the rescue, Ara is shot when she shields Kris with her body during a shootout with the kidnap men and the cops. She survives to marry Richard, the first full-blooded Pinoy to marry into the family.

By this time, Ara is no longer the black sheep, but the family's icon for change.

By this time, too, I was ready to spew my lunch on the floor of the movie house. For how could a movie that is so contrived, with characters that are so predictable, and dizzying plot twists that take you to the obligatory happy ending ever be hailed as this festival's best?

Back-patting gestures

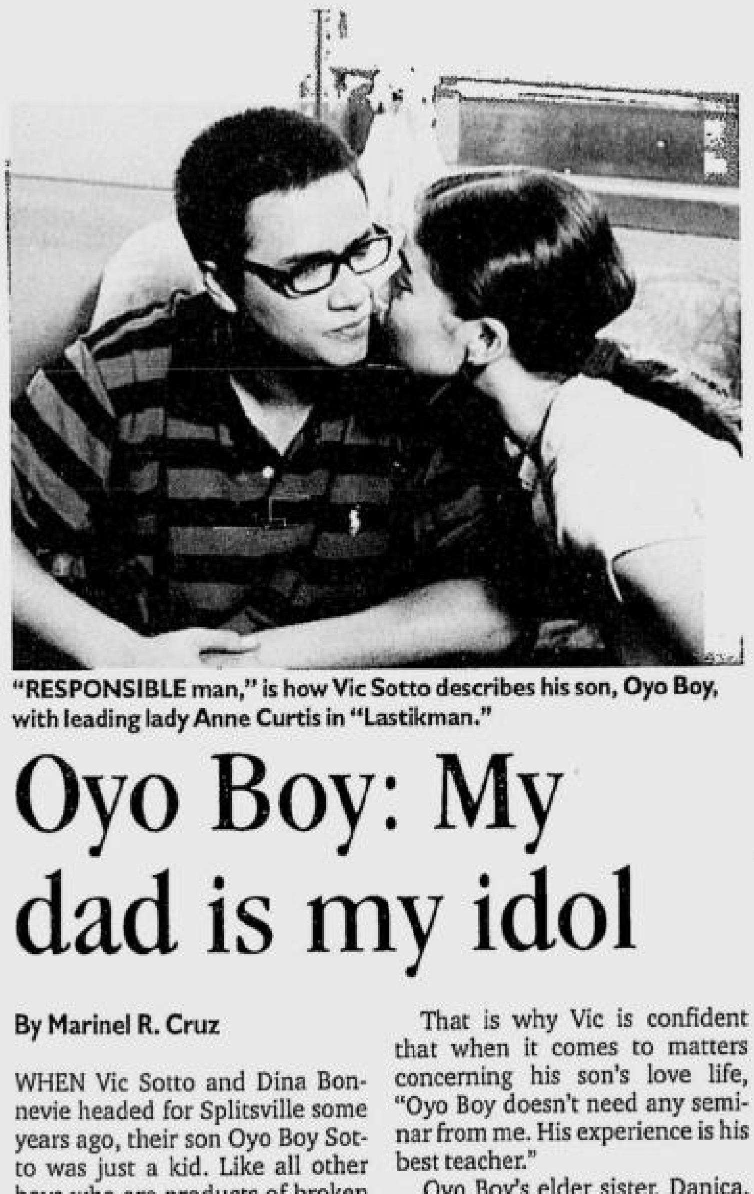
And the ending, my God, the ending! Talk about self-serving, back-patting gestures, this movie rubs in your face the fact that most of our heroes have Chinese blood by flashing their pictures one by one before the credits.

How I managed to last the more than two-buttock-numbing-hours it took director Joel Lamangan to tell the saga of the Go family was out of sheer duty to my mother who accompanied me to watch the movie.

'MANO PO'/A21

ARA MINA

KRIS AQUINO


"RESPONSIBLE man," is how Vic Sotto describes his son, Oyo Boy, with leading lady Anne Curtis in "Lastikman."

Oyo Boy: My dad is my idol

By Marinel R. Cruz

WHEN Vic Sotto and Dina Bonnevie headed for Splitsville some years ago, their son Oyo Boy Sotto was just a kid. Like all other boys who are products of broken families, Oyo Boy grew up without a father figure.

But according to Daddy Vic, Oyo Boy was able to cope with it well and grew up to be a responsible man.

"Had it not been for Oyo Boy's strong personality, he would have succumbed to drugs or to peer pressure," Vic told a group of writers during a recent gathering in Quezon City.

That is why Vic is confident that when it comes to matters concerning his son's love life, "Oyo Boy doesn't need any seminar from me. His experience is his best teacher."

Oyo Boy's elder sister, Danica, is a mainstay of GMA 7's youth-oriented show "Click," and the sitcom "Daddy Di Do Du."

For almost two years, Oyo Boy had gone steady with budding actress Anne Curtis. But Oyo Boy said being together too much brought strain to their relationship.

"We used to always fight about everything," Oyo Boy shared. "We've hurt each other so much that we both decided that we needed time for ourselves."

But according to Oyo Boy, he and Anne still regularly talk to each other, especially now that the two are both in the cast of "Lastikman," Vic's latest movie and OctoArts Films' official entry to the 2002 Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF).

Oyo Boy plays the young Hilario, the real identity of Lastikman, who gains supernatural powers after a rubber tree that gets hit by a meteor spills its sap on him. He discovers that he has the power of elasticity that enables him to transform to any shape.

"Lastikman" is a remake of the 1958 movie of the same title. It is based on a Komiks character created by Mars Ravelo. The movie is the first major film project of Oyo Boy with his dad.

"Although my studies are my

OYO/A21

SCREEN HERO AND LOVE INTEREST. "Lastikman" lead Vic Sotto with Donita Rose.

With 'Agimat' as topgrosser, Bong has no time for sourgraping

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

ACTION star **Bong Revilla Jr.** is aware that "Agimat," his top-grossing entry in the 2002 Metro Manila Film Festival, is a tough act to follow.

"I know that the audience will expect more from me now after they've seen 'Agimat,'" says Bong. "So I have to choose my films well. I'll do only big-budgeted movies."

In Metro Manila alone, "Agimat" was able to recoup its P50-million budget after only a week in the theaters. It is the topgrossing entry, followed only by the cross-cultural drama, "Mano Po," whose box office receipts were boosted by the 12 awards the film received during the "Gabi ng Parangal."

Even if "Agimat" got only one award—for best float—Bong has no time for sourgraping about the controversial filmfest. Apparently, he has chosen to be magnanimous with his box office triumph.

"Let's just forget it because we can't do anything about it anymore," Bong maintains. "I'm happy that our movie made money."

Bong finds it absurd that there was a report which said Pres. **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** boosted the ticket sales of "Agimat," so the film of action king **Fernando Poe Jr.**, reportedly her strongest rival for the presidential seat in 2004, would not make money.

"Whoever said that is simply trying to create a rift between me and my Ninong Ron," Bong says.

The only action star who did three films last year, which all turned out to be box office hits, Bong informs his next project is a sci-fi adventure a la "Matrix." The film will mark the directorial debut of "S-Files" megman **Rico Gutierrez**, who created the trailers for "Agimat."

Bong considers 2002 as "my year," after the emotional pain he went through when he lost for re-election as Cavite governor in 2001.

Middle of this year, he was also appointed by President Macapagal as chair of the Videogram Regulatory Board (VRB) for which he has been doing a relentless nationwide campaign against video pirates.

REVILLA JR. Considers 2002 as "my year."

"This is my prize," says Bong of his box-office victory. "I only proved to them that show biz is really my first love."

Does that mean no more politics for him next year? The buzz is loud that Bong is even running for senator, since this is the last term of his dad, Sen. **Ramon Revilla Sr.**

"I'm not closing my doors on politics," Bong grants. "I can't disclose anything now. Let's see . . ."

Meanwhile, it's back to school for Bong's 14-year-old son, **Jolo Revilla**, now a freshman high school at La Salle Zobel in Alabang. Jolo shares stellar billing with his dad in "Agimat," his second film after "Pepeng Agimat," also shown in the Metro Manila Film Festival in 2000.

"Jolo's priority should be his studies," Bong says. "There's no project for him yet."

Self-titled album

JUST when some people thought **Judith Banal** had quit from the local entertainment scene, here's welcome news that Judith has released a solo album under a new recording label, Evolution Music.

Her self-titled musical outing contains 12 songs, bannered by the carrier track, "Kung Alam Mo Lang," which she is now promoting. Judith wrote the first single with **Wowie Posadas.**

"The album is a very special project and I wish to share all my thoughts, love and happiness through it," says Judith. "I wrote other songs and I also have songs penned by other composers."

Judith loves to excel in pop and R&B, like the music of her favorite artists such as **Patti La Belle, Chaka Khan, Alicia Keys, Ashanti, Jennifer Lopez, Mariah Carey, Whitney Houston** and **Aretha Franklin.**

Judith started singing professionally for a band called Pepo, when she was only 17. She later became part of Cicada Band for two years then joined the Katindig Jazz band. She also became a member of the Powerplay Band for two years, before she eventually went solo as a performer.

In 1992, Judith got a chance to display her acting talent onstage, when she was chosen by Asian superstar **Dick Lee** to be his leading lady in the musical, "Nagraland," which opened in Singapore and also toured Japan and Hong Kong.

The following year, Judith performed as lead vocalist for a famous Japanese reggae-ska band, Boom. She joined the band's club Asia concert tour and the Far East winter tour. She also recorded lead vocals on two albums of the band.

After performing in Japan for two years, Judith got a recording break from Sony Music Japan, for which she recorded her first solo album, "Tokyo Love."

After the launch of the album, Judith embarked on a tour of Japan and performed in 46 cities.

She continued touring with Boom as guest artist in Cannes, France for the annual Midem Music Festival in 1997 and in Tubingen, Germany for the Latin-Jazz Festival that same year. She also had the privilege of performing in Switzerland for the prestigious Montreaux Jazz Festival.

Judith returned to the Philippines also in 1997 to interpret **Soc Villanueva's** song entry, "Delikado, Delikadeza," an entry in the 1997 Metropop Song Festival. The song copped the third prize and became an instant hit.

In 1998, Judith did a performance tour of the US—Chicago, Atlantic City, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Nevada—with **Gary Valenciano** and Side A Band. In October that year, she had her major dance concert at the Grand Ballroom of the Waterfront Hotel in Cebu City.

Last year, Judith was again tapped to interpret another Metropop song entry, "Something I Wrote," composed by **Mon Espia.**

Evolution Music is headed by Wowie Posadas, who has gained an edge in the music field apart from being a lawyer. Being a musician himself gave Posadas the idea to do what is closest to his heart and that is producing music. To date, he has worked with some of the top artists in the country such as **Ogie Alcasid, Chad Borja** and **Tots Tolentino.**

Posadas aspires to bring the country's music to the highest possible level and he has proven it with the first album release of Evolution Music.

Top session musicians such as **Noel Mendez** and Mon Espia on guitars, **Tots Tolentino** on sax, **Jeri de Leon** on bass joined Judith in recording the album, which was mastered in the US.

Evolution Music also produced an MTV for Judith's first single, "Kung Alam Mo Lang," shot in film by the award-winning director **Monti Parungao.** The record label has entered into a partnership with Warner Music for the distribution of its products.

BANAL. Wrote some tracks in her solo album.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

STEADFAST RULER. Lapu-Lapu, played by action star Lito Lapid.

'LAPU-LAPU'

A well-executed and technically resplendent effort

REVIEW

By Oliver Pulumbarit
Contributor

WHILE the action heroes of the 2002 MMFF battled mystical foes bathed in shimmery special effects and prosthetics, the real-life lead of the entry "Lapu-Lapu" (played by veteran action star and Pampanga Governor Lito Lapid) fought would-be conquerors in nicely executed combat sequences in a respectable compromise between historical fact and artistic license.

The first hero of Cebu (and the country) gains celluloid immortality in this technically resplendent but overly somber epic.

Not much is told about his early days. He is already a rajah as the tale begins. Lapu-Lapu's dominion is being threatened by a marauding tribe led by Rajah Humabon (Vic Vargas), a group that the renowned warrior-king vanquishes with his unflinching army. His mettle is rested further with the arrival of foreign colonizers.

The new visitors have brought a new religion with them, with seemingly superior armaments, led by Fernando Magallanes (or Ferdinand Magellan, portrayed by Dante Rivero). The picture mostly focuses on that period of the king's life, which is plucked from what little is known of him in the history books.

Humorless

We're shown a depiction of the man as humorless, almost agonizing over the burdensome task of governing over his loyal subjects. But he's actually projected as a just, steadfast ruler who's Al Gore-like in his robotic disposition. It's a pretty good effort, especially by director William G. Mayo and screenwriter Jerry Tirazona, one that's ambitious and well-executed in most parts, but requires unfettered patience in others.

The treatment is very reverential: Lapu-Lapu can do no wrong. Very little hints of humanity can be seen and he isn't revealed to have a side that's not stoic, even during his downtime.

This is made even more evident when he's betrothed and wed to a princess, elegantly played by Joyce Jimenez. The eventual wedding night seems too much like an extension of his work.

The screen couple has very little chemistry. The compatibility of ice cream and bagoong comes to mind. This isn't the first time Lapid has teamed up with a sex siren, but this particular union is just a bit of stretch.

It's good to see Jimenez in a role that doesn't require her to have chocolate bits fall on her chest, though. And she's come a long way from the first role too, but she's mostly relegated to being the token pretty babe in the scenes where the royal family is shown in a group shot. Overall, though, the large cast of actors is a competent one.

The film's strength also relies on the nicely choreographed fight scenes. While the bloody swordfights aren't perfect (there are some revealing shots that show huge distances between some swords and their points of impact), the numerous, expertly elaborate duels overpower them.

Pent-up fury

The furious mingling of dozens of extras look and feel genuine enough. During these moments, Lapu-Lapu is able to unleash all his pent-up fury, dispelling his rather ho-hum personality in no time at all.

The Battle of Mactan is also graphically realized. It's just as climatic and as chaotic as any artist would imagine it. It reminded me of an illustration project in college, slightly over a decade ago. The class was assigned to paint Lapu-Lapu's forces locked in battle with Magellan's. I just cringe at the thought of my work on that plate now, but it made me think of the imagination and planning of the people involved in the movie's process. It was interesting to see their interpretation of that conflict spring to life and bustling with slam-bang activity.

The scenes were also partly made visually credible by the eye-catching costumes. There's individuality, as each royal and regular native has varying looks and henna tattoos. This also applies to the fine artistry on the Spanish armada's costumes. They denote authenticity, too. Many of the environments used were ensconced with carefully created props that reflect the indigenous customs and culture of the time.

No subtitles

Noticeably missing are subtitles, for the long conversations of the *Conquistadors*. There are several scenes and a monologue that don't let the audience in, mainly because majority of viewers only know a few Spanish words.

A lot of foreboding statements or humor could've been inserted with the absence of subtitles. If we knew what Dante Rivero and Ian Veneracion's characters were talking about, we obviously would've felt more for the scenes.

The deft photography and all the other combined technical factors make "Lapu-Lapu" a worthy big screen fare. While it doesn't go to great lengths to humanize this great symbol of patriotism, the film succeeds in making him the staunch embodiment of a devoted government official, sans the bad connotations of politics. So even when he spoke in the third person once ("*Habang nabubuhay si* Lapu-Lapu . . . ") and all his speech patterns resemble an unending declamation piece, it's okay.

The film is clearly a team effort. Everyone involved pitched in on the organized chaos. It's an antiseptic one, sure, but it's an epic that honors a real hero's leadership, untouched by brazen politicking, almost five centuries ago.

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8:00 - 9:30	Manong Maceda sa Umaga	Ernie Maceda
9:30 - 11:00	Usapang Claire	Claire Dela Fuente / Ka Maxi
11:00 -12:00	Okey Ka, Mare Ko	Jo Reyes / Cristy Dailo
12:00 -1:00	Business is our Business	Butch Del Castillo / Ayen Infante
1:00 - 1:30	Biyaheng Langit	Rey Langit
1:30 - 2:30	Woman Talk	Mel Estonilo / Marou Sarne
2:30 - 3:00	Echoes of the Heart	Evangeline Pascual
3:00 - 4:00	Isumbong Mo Kay Tulfo	Mon Tulfo
4:00 - 5:00	Ratsada Balita	Ely Aligora / Caloy Castro
5:00 - 6:00	Kontra Punto	Alvin Capino / Jonathan Dela Cruz
6:00 - 7:30	Chachahin Mo Baby	Jimmy Morato
7:30 - 8:00	Attorney No Case	Willy Sarion

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Exec's leisure activities run a mile long

By Llita T. Logarta
Contributor

PRIVATE TIME

YOU could say David Du is a man for all seasons—literally—since you will find him outdoors more often than not.

Not that he has not enough to do indoors as the country sales manager of Hitachi Data Systems (HDS), which involves data storage products—the core hardware in all the infrastructure of information technology. His office at the Locsin Building along Ayala Ave. in Makati is a beehive of activity, that is, when he is not traveling to where business calls for his personal supervision. This is because he is also president of Du Customs Brokerage and of Seantek Imaging, Inc., both full-time jobs in themselves.

But one could be convinced Du was weaned on tiger's milk, since he demonstrates enough energy not just for a fast and furious business schedule, but for a just as fast and furious schedule for recreation and leisure activities that range from the sea to the mountains; from the countryside to gardens; and from sports to pets to art. His leisure activities run a mile long.

No matter the season, be it rain or shine; or the place, indoors or outdoors, David Du is always doing something.

Listen to this. He is a certified instructor-trainer of the National Association of Diving Instructors (NAUI), an association standing for the most prestigious, most difficult, military style, underwater training school and teaching methodology in the world.

He is also an instructor of underwater photography for the association; a divemaster, underwater hunting instructor and a certified rescue and first-aid administrator (for the Red Cross, as well).

He is a competition-class big-game fisherman—focusing more on billfish (marlin, sailfish) and big yellow-fin tuna.

He jet-skis and water-skis.

Perhaps not surprisingly, he keeps fresh-water aquariums. His favorite fish being the exotic Arowana and Flower Horn. He also collects shells.

He is a mountaineering instructor, and apparently just as skilled on the mountain slopes as he is in the deep blue sea waters.

He plays golf. His lowest recorded handicap being 8, putting him in the Class A group.

He plays basketball, is a competition-level table tennis player, and plays chess like a master.

More: He has participated in several photography contests, loves dogs and birds, and paints in both oil and pastel.

But perhaps his favorite outdoor activity, one which puts him even closer to Nature and gives him respite from his hectic lifestyle, is tending to his bonsai garden.

DAVID Du shows off some of his prized bonsai specimens in his garden.

Bonsai is the art of growing naturally or artificially dwarfed trees in shallow pots or bowls and training them to grow into beautiful shapes. This originated in China, spread to Japan, which popularized it, and eventually traveled to the West. It is unique in that it requires total patience, absolute loving care and devotion, and an artist's enthusiasm.

Ultimately, the result represents proof of life, survival, maturity, prosperity and good fortune. One could say, David Du appears to possess in abundance all the qualities—and consequences—of a bonsai lover.

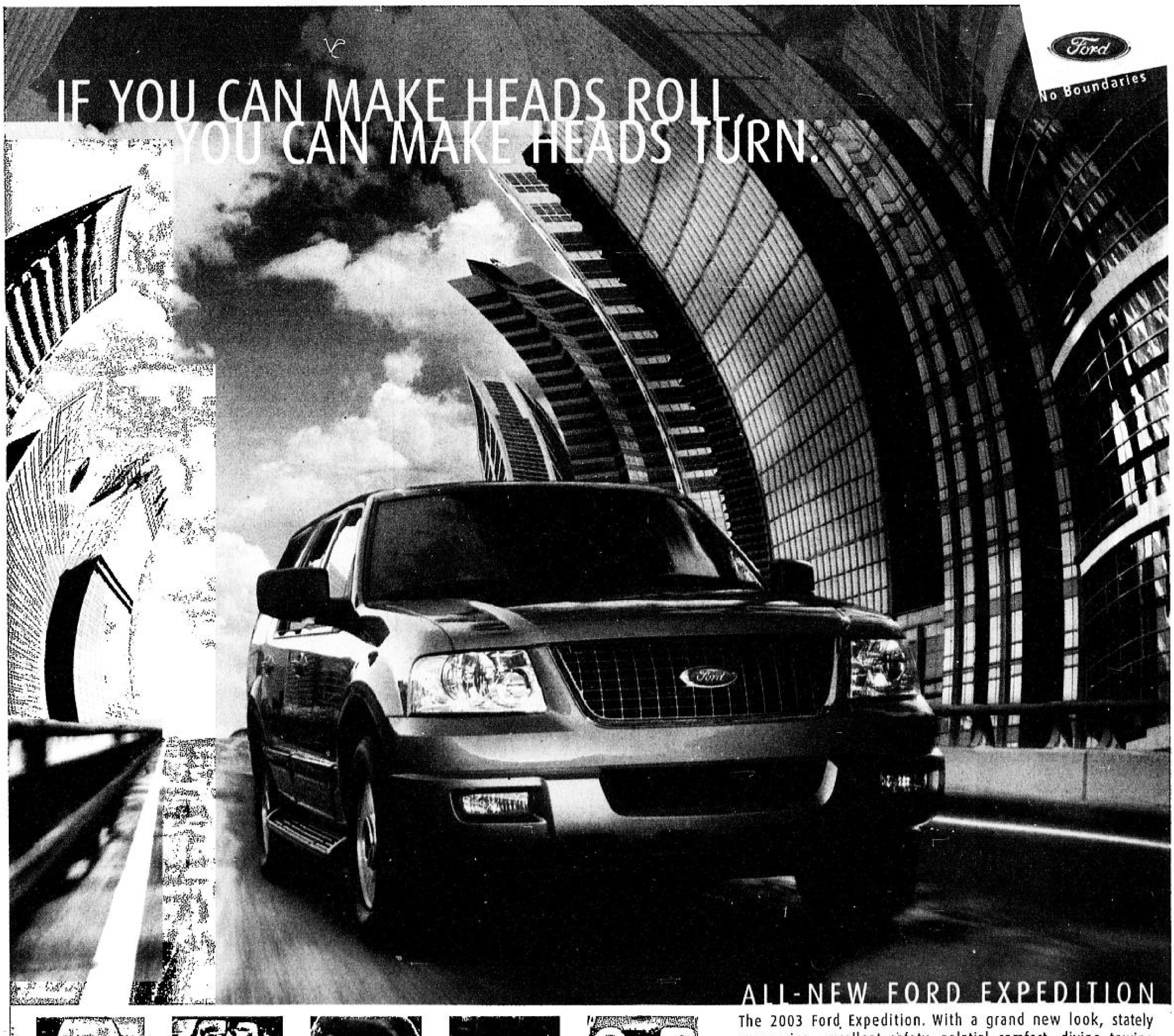
Du has been into bonsai for the past 20 years. He is a master of the bantigue species, a plant that is a favorite of bonsai-growers, and won the Best-in-Show Prize for his specimen submitted in the 1998 Philippine Bonsai Society, Inc. (PBSI) show held in San Fernando, Pampanga.

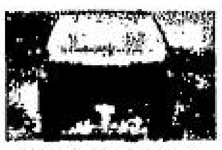
He is a longtime director of the PBSI and recently was named overall chair of the 7th Asia-Pacific Bonsai and Suiseki (Natural Stone) Exhibition and Convention or Aspac 2003, scheduled for Feb. 27- March 2, 2003, at SM MegaTrade Hall, Mandaluyong City. This is a first-time event for the Philippines and will be attracting delegations from international bonsai and suiseki societies, as well as recognized foreign and local masters of both garden arts to deliver lecture-demonstrations.

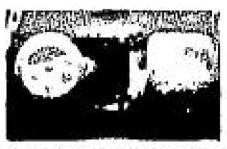
Du feels it is a great honor to have been named to oversee the event and for the past year has been working hard with Willi Hahn, president of PBSI, and Felicidad Gupit, president of the Natural Stone Society of the Philippines Inc.(NSSPI), and supporting agencies such as the Department of Tourism, Philippine Conventions and Corp., Department of Agriculture and Philippine Airlines, to assure the success of Aspac 2003.

One may well ask: Where does all these leave time for Du's personal life? Not to worry. This 38 year-old pre-med undergraduate of the Ateneo University—who early on decided he'd rather be a businessman who could combine work and play at his own pace—makes sure he has the desired balance and proportion in his life by treating his family as his most important customer. He makes a point of sharing his recreational and leisure activities with his wife and four children, and now the arrival of a new baby has added even more activities for all of them.

His guiding gospel is "Always be fair, honest and sincere, and do the best you can in any endeavor, such that at the end of the day, if a customer does not buy from you, it will be his loss!"







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Veterinarian develops peso-saving stove

By Mei Magsino
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

SAN JOSE, Batangas—As local oil companies have either implemented or planned to implement another round of price increases, households using liquefied petroleum gas have found an ally in a 47-year-old veterinarian who has invented an alternative cooking equipment.

From one failed invention, Thomas Anceno has developed a stove that combines the economy of a charcoal stove and the fast-cooking capacity of a gas stove.

"I was about to burn the raw materials of my failed invention when suddenly the idea of furnace fire flashed into my mind and then I started working on the furnace principle," Anceno said. "What I invented is a stove, which I call the Fantastic Kalan, that cooks fast and saves more time and money."

His invention has already traveled throughout the country and is being used by many farm-based households and city dwellers.

Accidental

Born and raised in General Santos City, Anceno came to Lipa City in 1998. A veterinary graduate of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, he had worked in big poultry and piggery farms before deciding to stay in Lipa City where his family now lives.

The city abounds with poultry and piggery farms that seek his veterinary expertise.

Anceno has been inventing gadgets the past years. His company, now registered at the Securities and Exchange Commission under First Pacific Winds, has for its first invention a roof ventilator, which he uses in his own home and sells until now.

The Fantastic Kalan started in August this year, according to Anceno. But he did not intend to make a stove.

"My intention was to discover a simple method to manufacture activated carbon used in filtering tap water," Anceno said. "I just followed the instructions I downloaded from the Internet. The result was clean water but it tastes like burned charcoal and smells like burned rice. It was a complete failure."

Then Anceno called his friend from the Philippine Science High School and asked him why the procedure he used had failed.

"Instead of inspiring me, he advised me just to buy the finished product because the machine that makes activated carbon costs millions," Anceno says, adding that he felt so frustrated then.

Disappointed, Anceno was contemplating on burning the charcoal he thought was useless.

"Then the flame from the furnace used by blacksmiths in making knives and garden tools flashed into my mind. That simple principle of furnace burning gave me the idea. I started to make a prototype using my five-year-old son's remote-controlled toy," Anceno says.

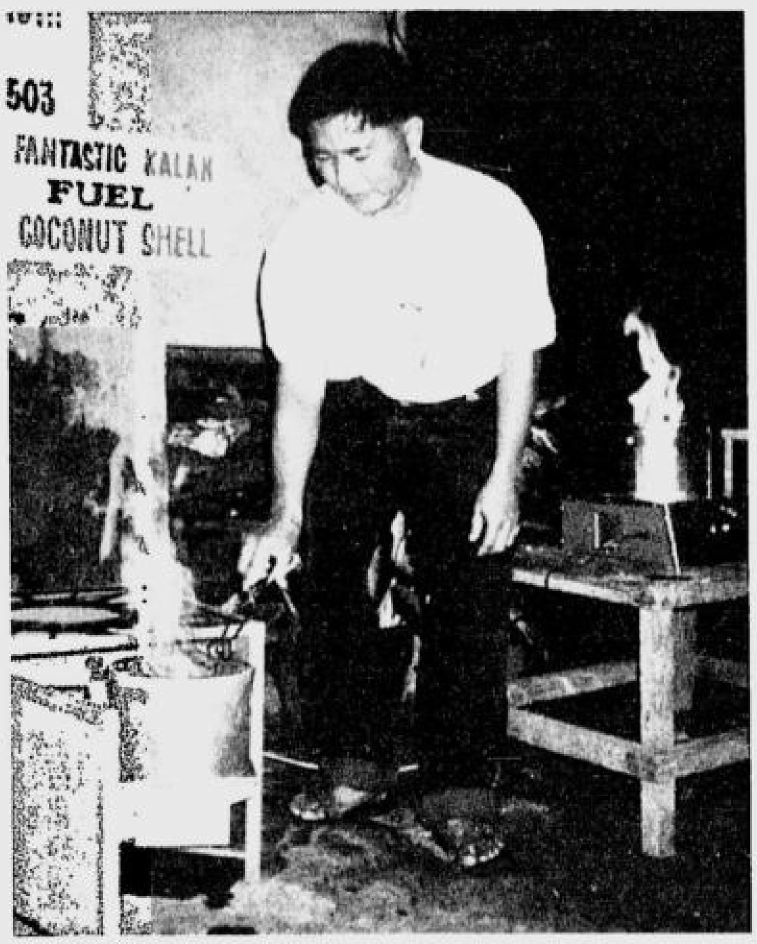
He got the motor of his son's remote-controlled car and put the small plastic propeller inside an empty can of evaporated milk.

He then fit the can into an empty square biscuit can with a hole on the side and had the top off to make the stove and installed the fan side and the small can in the biscuit can.

For the propeller to work, he had to use electricity.

The propeller then blew air that got into the air chamber and fanned the ignited charcoal, burning the fuel fast.

The continuous supply of air (oxygen) boosts the combustion of the charcoal further.



BASED on furnace principle, Thomas Anseno was able to invent a stove that saves on charcoal, cooks fast, and can even use fresh wood.

"When we tested the stove using charcoal, the fire exploded to almost two feet," Anceno says. From the prototype, he improved the design into three models. And from there, he started to sell the Fantastic Kalan.

"I called it Fantastic Kalan because it is the only stove that uses a fan," Anceno says.

Difficulty

One thing that Anceno found hard in marketing his invention is the difficulty to explain and make sure that the people could understand the principle used in his invention.

"Later I found a good strategy to make the people understand what this stove is all about. I did an actual demonstration that one cup of charcoal can cook a kilo of rice," Anceno says. "Now, some of my clients say they can even cook two kilos of rice."

Anceno had the Fantastic Kalan patented on Sept. 3. He has since sold more than a hundred units of Fantastic Kalan all over the country.

With concentrated heat of more than 500 degrees Celsius, Fantastic Kalan combines the inexpensive cooking capability of a charcoal stove with the fast cooking capability of a gas stove.

Its charcoal container is made of firebricks that can stand up to 1,300 degrees Celsius of heat.

With the improved version, Fantastic Kalan now has three models.

The one with 90-percent stainless steel costs P1,500, while the double burner costs P2,900.

The low-cost version with 20-percent stainless steel costs P1,000.

"Fantastic Kalan is the only stove with a fan and, at the same time saves fuel, cooks fast, and is very hot. That's why it's really fantastic," Anceno said.

"It's the only stove where you can use fresh firewood and coconut shell as fuel. And it is not even messy."

Fantastic Kalan has been featured on television before. The only problem is that the host called it Superkalan.

Anceno has a regular radio-guesting every Saturday and Sunday as a veterinarian in Kabukiran, an afternoon radio program of dzMM.

"One time, while I was there, I aired to my clients to meet me at the gate of the broadcast studio at 7 p.m.," Anceno says, "I didn't know that more people who heard that became interested. When I went out to meet my clients, there were more people who wanted me to demonstrate what the Fantastic Kalan can do. So, I did the demonstration right outside the ABS-CBN gate."

That time, a production assistant of Knowledge Power saw Anceno's demonstration and immediately featured Fantastic Kalan and Anceno in the television program.

"But my excitement faded when Ernie Baron mentioned Superkalan not Fantastic Kalan," Anseno says. "Fantastic Kalan is different from Superkalan because it has a fan."

Anseno says there have been many people who still mistake his stove for Superkalan.

Advantages

"The advantages of Fantastic Kalan is that you can save a lot of fuel because you can use wood chips, fresh coconut shells, charcoal, or any hard combustible material," Anseno says.

He claimed that his product is even recommended in households, restaurants, blacksmith shops, jewelry shops, fiestas and special occasions.

For those who live in farms where dried wood and coconut shells abound, they could save a lot if they use Fantastic Kalan, Anseno adds.

"I think the biggest success of my stove is that you can use cheap fuel with fast cooking time. Ordinary charcoal stove takes time to ignite and cook. With Fantastic Kalan, igniting and cooking is fast," Anseno says.

In Lipa city, one of his biggest clients is Bahay Bibingka. The *bibingka* (rice cakes) makers have reduced the cooking time for their product to 80 percent and saved more on the fuel consumption.

Anceno also has plans of expansion.

"Given the chance, I plan to saturate Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao to save on liquified petroleum gas consumption that will eventually help Filipinos to save dollars on LPG."

American airline tests selling food on its long flights

PHOENIX—Airline passengers have long used the boxed meals served on flights as a kind of entertainment, a source of jokes and small talk with fellow passengers. But are they willing to pay for it?

America West Airlines is prepared to find out. In a move that might prompt other cash-strapped airlines to join suit, the United States' eighth-largest carrier will test a "Buy on Board" program starting Monday that allows passengers to buy meals costing from $3 to $10.

The meals initially will be sold on about dozen flights a day for three weeks. If the experiment proves successful, America West may begin selling meals on all flights longer than 2 1/2 hours, said spokesperson Janice Monahan.

The menu will include a $3 snack box packed with cheese, crackers, nuts, beef jerky and cookies or ice cream. More expensive meals, up to the $10 Chicken Kiev with side dishes and dessert, will be offered.

"The program is designed to offset the cost of providing food, not to make a profit," Monahan said. "We're trying to meet customer needs without raising ticket prices."

America West reported its eighth straight quarterly loss in the fall of this year.

Some airlines are considering a similar meal program. Northwest Airlines spokesperson Kurt Ebenhoch said the carrier is studying the idea of selling food aboard its flights.

Julie King, a spokesperson for Continental Airlines, said the company is reviewing the idea. The company is "figuring out what customers value and are willing to pay for," King said.

Other airlines, including Southwest, United, Delta and American, said Thursday they have no immediate plans to begin selling food.

Southwest Airlines said it does not anticipate changing its offering of peanuts and drinks. "The majority of our passengers know that if they're going to fly Southwest and they're hungry, they probably should grab McDonald's before the flight," spokesperson Angela Vargo said.

American Airlines spokesperson Tara Baten said the carrier looked into the idea of selling food but determined it would be less expensive to continue its current food service, which cost the company $778 million in 2001.

This is not the first time America West has tinkered with in-flight meals. After the Sept. 11 attacks, the airline discontinued meals on all flights until December 2001, and currently serves meals only on longer flights. *AP*

Chinese medicine could be death of Russian symbol of power and beauty

CHINESE medicine could be the death of the Amur tigers that symbolize the power and natural beauty of Russia's far east.

Conservationists say the local authorities' prescription for economic rebirth of the poverty-stricken region will make it harder to protect one of the world's most majestic beasts.

"China uses virtually every part of the tiger, from the whiskers to the tail, for traditional Chinese medicine. Even the eyes," said Sergei Bereznyuk, director of the Phoenix Fund in Vladivostok which is leading efforts to protect the Amur tiger.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 poachers, driven by the voracious demands of traditional Chinese medicine, hunted the Amur tiger to the point of extinction in a few years.

Predators came in many forms: the wealthy in search of the thrills of big game hunting; poachers seeking lucrative skins and body parts for China's medicine men; destitute woodsmen trying to make ends meet after the demise of their traditional way of life.

Michiel Hoette, a Vladivostok-based Dutchman working to save the tiger, says development of the region's economy is endangering the Amur tigers, the largest continuous tiger population in the world.

India has more tigers in the wild than Russia but their habitat is fragmented, unlike in the Primorye region which provides the perfect food base and cover for the big cat.

But it is facing large scale destruction by illegal logging which Russia's Audit Chamber says cost the federal budget $20 billion a year in lost taxes and customs duties.

Logging, dev't. menace

Logging by legitimate businesses and the Russian forestry department, sometimes carried out with little regard for the environment, has only aggravated the situation.

Meanwhile, new roads criss-crossing the sparsely-populated region and increased agricultural development are leading to new settlements, increasing pressure on the tiger population.

"Research shows that tigers that live close to roads just don't live long. They are killed, so reproduction is less and mortality higher," said Hoette.

"If an area gets more developed, tiger mortality goes up and these areas with good protection cannot provide the inflow of tigers to sustain the population in the whole range any more.

"That means that even if you have a good food habitat in some places, the tigers just won't live there any more and the population will go down. And you get problems with inbreeding."

Short on energy supplies and jobs, the governor of the Primorye region, Sergei Darkin, is focused on developing rail links with the Korean peninsula and a major pipeline from the far east Sakhalin oil and gas fields.

Conservationists complain that new road projects have been rammed through without proper environmental impact assessments being carried out, a charge dismissed by the local authority.

Darkin, whose wife is a keen tiger conservationist, says ecologists should not worry: "I take this issue pretty seriously. I think the experience of the past few years has produced results, the number of these animals is increasing. And in some places they are presenting a threat to the population."

Sport of kingpins

Such incidents are rare, say tiger defense groups, adding that mankind's constant expansion into tiger territory has made life for the great cats even more nasty, brutal and short. Even in a healthy population, male tigers live only six to seven years, such is the competition for mates and territory.

"New Russians," luxuriating in their new-found wealth of the last decade, are the real villains of the piece, their cash all too often buying them impunity.

"There are big problems with the new Russians," said Hoetter. "The people in charge, the authorities, the police chiefs, the judges, the prosecutors and big businessmen who are wealthy . . . and are very difficult to deal with.

"They are very powerful and have good networks and know most of the existing traditional law enforcement agencies, which are either involved in poaching themselves or they don't care to deal with these kinds of people", he said.

The regional body in charge of policing Primorye's forests said officials were too busy to be interviewed for this article.

The Phoenix Fund has organized its own group of tiger inspectors who attempt to stem the tide of tiger poaching. They earn $400 a month, a decent wage in an area where officially the average income is around $140.

Police have little incentive to heroism when turning a blind eye can double wages that start at around $100 a month.

The problem was aggravated when the government abolished the practice of allowing law enforcement bodies to keep part of the proceeds from confiscated contraband, say environmentalists.

That deprived staff of cash bonuses which acted as a major motivator, they complain.

"If you look at the (economic) developments and the threats (to the tigers), and the way they are accumulating, then the future looks extremely bleak," said Hoette. *Reuters*

University of Wales makes 50 MBA scholarship grants available

THE DEMAND for unconstrained access to learning regardless of time and place paved the way to the Philippines' first-fully online UOW MBA (University of Wales Masters in Business Administration) Program.

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The University of Wales was established in 1883 and is a major national institution. It has a tradition for excellence in education and its qualifications are well sought after in the United Kingdom and internationally. The University's mission is to continually make a distinctive and distinguished contribution to higher education in Wales, the United Kingdom and the international community.

Ruiz says, "By combining innovative technology with world-class training content, PurpleTrain.com offers companies and individuals with a high value, quality and effective online training solution."

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For more information on the UOW MBA Program, call 727-7407, email purpletrain@informatics.com.ph or log on to www.purpletrain.com now.

Young execs play ball to kick away stress

By Marge C. Enriquez

ON Sundays in various school football fields, working guys chuck in their mobiles, slacks and leather shoes for spikes, shin guards and shorts. Undaunted by the penetrating ultraviolet rays, they spend 90 minutes under the sun to let off the stresses accumulated in the week and indulge in the sport they've played since childhood—football (sometimes called soccer).

It's their version of their Sunday Club, except that they compete in tournaments—but don't get paid. Everything is done for the love of the sport and for the camaraderie.

ARCHITECT Jericho Adriano does a chest trap.

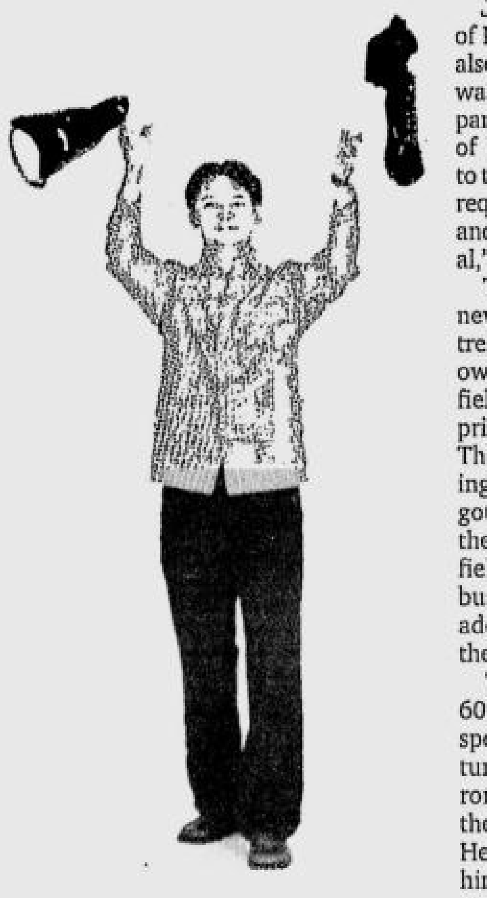
One of these groups is the Lateo Football Club, the name of which signifies the sport's power to unite. The Lateo Football Club was named after the combination of two rival schools, La Salle and Ateneo, from which all the members are alumni. It started out with former high school varsity soccer members in the University of the Philippines, playing in schools. Today Lateo joins several tournaments and plays against professionals. Recently the team advanced to the playoffs in the Globe Super Cup Tournament, the largest and most prestigious competition in the country. However, it lost to the Philippine Army team, which plays professionally.

Whether they win or lose, football as a recreation has its rewards—mostly psychic.

Samuel Tang Jr., 28, vice president for operations of Hoffsman Systematic Designs Inc. and Lateo's captain, has been playing football since the seventh grade, "It's a form of release. I look forward to Sundays so I can exercise and meet my friends."

Joel Ong, 29, who runs several businesses including the popular clothing store Milkwear, took up football at 8 years old.

"I've played seven sports competitively. To me, football is the most complete sport. It involves the physical and the mental and entails strategies. People. our age—20s and 30s—stick to the gym. It may be convenient if you're working and don't have much time. In football, you're in an open field and you experience the fun you've had when you were a kid," he says.



JOEL Ong plays with his shin guards.

Jericho Adriano, architect of his own firm and managing director of arkispecs.com, points out that football develops balance and coordination. "When you start out as a kid, you learn to kick the ball with one foot and run on the other. As a contact sport, you're built to be tougher. Learning these skills early on will help you in other sports. Football is a microcosm of life. You score a few times. It takes hard work to get a goal. Like life, you get a break only a few times. Breaks don't come every two minutes."

Jose Fabian Millar, 31, CEO of Netquest Systems who has also been playing since he was 8, says football, compared to the national pastime of basketball, is more suited to the Filipino build. It doesn't require height. "With funding and training, we can be global," he says.

These men represent the new generation of entrepreneurs who set up their own businesses in fairly new fields. Yet they give as much priority to their passion. They are unanimous in saying that in football, they've got to be strategic and play the various positions in the field in order to lead. In their businesses, they have to be adept in the various tasks of their jobs to succeed.

Tang says there are some 60 companies in the country specializing in systems furniture. In a competitive environment, personal service is the edge to win more clients. He says the sport has helped him in his career. His training as Lateo's team captain enables him to exercise leadership skills in the corporate world.

"In football there's the teamwork among 11 players and the subs. You have to be united to reach goal. Like at work, it's a team effort."

Ong runs five businesses at one time. Most of his efforts are focused on the repositioning of Milkwear. Three years ago, the store was very popular for its clubwear developed by such progressive designers as Paolo Raymundo and Ignacio Loyola. However, selling ultra-trendy clothes is not sustainable. His company bought the production line of French designer Pascal Banet. Milkwear has shifted to producing updated classics, uniforms and bridal ensembles. (To prove Milkwear's radical shift from club to corporate wear, Ong, Millar and Adriano are sporting the new look in this page.)

COACH Jose Fabian Millar juggles his work schedule like his soccer ball.

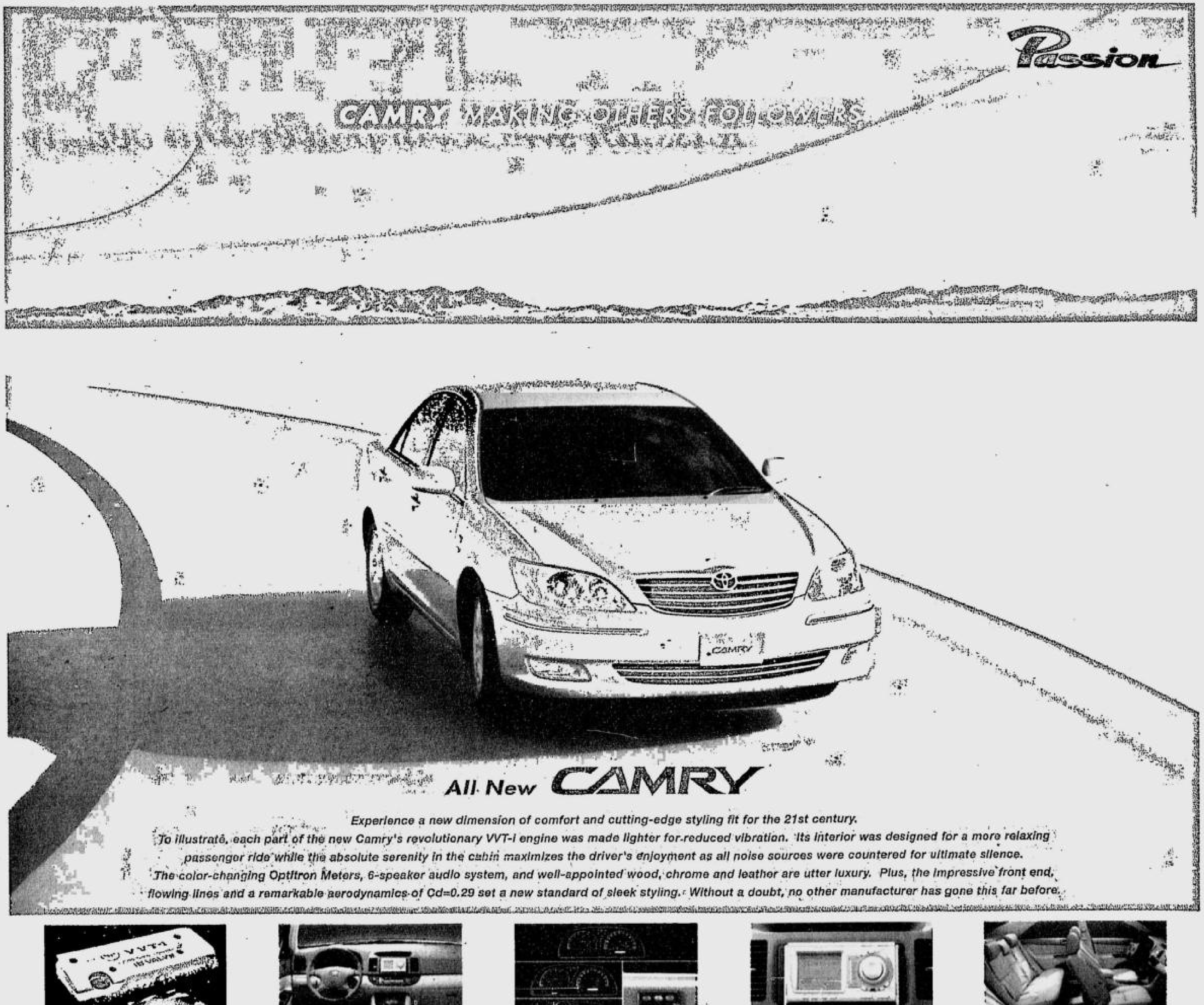
Ong wakes up at 7 a.m. and comes home at 11 p.m. He goes to three different offices everyday out of the five, "It's not correct to say that if you're the boss, you have your time. Being your own boss, you have to put a lot more time. Football helps you look at long-term goals. To get in shape for a tournament, you can't even do it in two weeks. To achieve goals, you have to plan way ahead. You have to involve everyone in your team and bring the best out in the players. That's the same with running a business, you've got to set goals and motivate yourself and others."

Millar was busy at the height of the IT boom. When the business reached a plateau, he and his partner diversified into a new industry called neutraceuticals. "As an entrepreneur, you need a lot of perseverance in taking care of your business. Football develops those virtues. In football, it takes a lot of patience before scoring a goal. I used to be temperamental. Over the years, football has taught me to be patient, to take care of your place in the field and to wait for the opportunity to come. Same thing with business. When the opportunity arrives, you try to manage it until you make your breakthrough."

Adriano is both into multi-media services and in the creative field. "In football, 90 minutes is a long time for you to get a flash of brilliance. Design inspiration can hit you at 3 a.m. You have to seize the moment. It might not come again. In a whole lifetime, a golden opportunity comes, if you don't capitalize on it, it will go to waste."

He adds that football is not ageist like other sports. "Even if you grow old, it's still playable. The ground is soft. Even if you get a hard fall, you roll and don't get injured as severely as in other sports."

An example is the Bluguards, a team composed of middle-aged executives whose sons also play football. The team practices on Sundays in Ateneo then socializes afterwards. Despite the midlife paunch and gray hairs of some members, the Bluguard is "competitive," says Ong. "We look up to them. It's like that how we'd like to be at that age—still playing."



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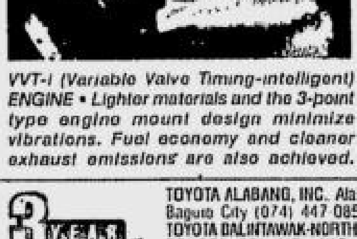

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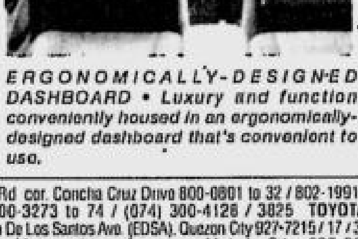

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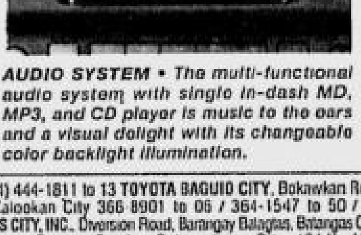

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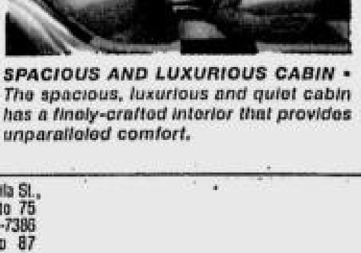

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supported our endeavors
over our first 10 years of operation.

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giathai@ksc15.th.com www.giathailand.com

ANNOUNCEMENT

Effective January 2, 2003

PARSONS INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

moved to a new business address at:

6th Floor, L.V. Locsin Building
Ayala Avenue corner Makati Avenue
Makati City, Philippines

Telephone No. (632) 8786080

www.parsons.com

Please address all communications to the above new address.

NOTICE OF LOSS

This is to notify the public that **STOCK CERTIFICATES NOS. 00015045** covering 86,281 shares and 00000229 covering 10,163 shares owned by Alejandra S. Guangko have been issued on November 8, 2001 and declared lost on September 24, 2002. All transactions covered by these documents from said date shall not be honored by

SUN LIFE OF CANADA PROSPERITY BOND FUND, INC.
and SUN LIFE OF CANADA PROSPERITY BALANCED FUND, INC.

For more information, please call or see us at
10/F Tower II, The Enterprise Center
6766 Ayala Avenue
corner Paseo de Roxas, Makati City
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Qualification:

- Male/Female, 21-35 years old
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Interested applicants should come in business attire from Jan. 6 to 10, 2003, every 2P.M. at:
Suite 1003, Prestige Tower Condominium,
Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City

HIRING

Restaurant Manager

- Business graduate
- with 5 years experience

Waiter/ Waitress/Cook

- preferably graduate of culinary school
- specialty in Asian Cuisine

Bookkeeper

- Accounting graduate
- with 3 years experience

Submit resumé to:
KKK Restaurant, West Ave., QC
(Next to Banco de Oro)

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

CUSTOMS REPRESENTATIVES

Male, 20-30 years old at least a graduate of Customs Administration with full knowledge and experience in customs operations, honest and hardworking.

Requirements: Bio-data, NBI, Police and Barangay Clearance and recent 2"x2" photo:

Apply in person or send the requirements to:

EVP International Corporation
2/F JM Bldg. Pres. Osmeña Highway cor.
Rockefeller St., Makati City
For Inquiries, call: 843-1264 / 816-1584

WANTED

Experienced computer graduate

(female) with accounts in major and promodizers (male) to work in reputed Dept. Stores with pleasing personality, preferably with knowledge of electronics (technician).

Contact Dave Daryani
Tel. No. 525-0990

WANTED IMMEDIATELY

COOK

- Babae, may edad na 35 na taon pataas.
- Magaling magluto ng pinoy na pagkain.
- Magaling magluto ng pinoy na kakanin.
- Marunong magluto ng pagkaing banyaga.

ACCOUNTING CLERK

- Female, at least 35 years old.
- Accounting graduate with at least 10 years work related experience.
- Computer literate.

HOUSE MANAGER

- Female, at least 35 years old and above.
- HRM graduate with at least 10 years work related experience.
- Willing to work long hours
- Computer literate

BUILDING ADMINISTRATOR

- Male, at least 35 years old
- Graduate of any related course
- With at least 8 years work related experience
- Willing to work long hours
- Computer literate

Please submit/send: resumé (with copies of diploma/employment certificate), NBI clearance and health certificate at:

No. 3 Harvard Road, Forbes Park
Makati City or Fax at No. 810-6296

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with following qualities

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- WITH EXPERIENCE IN FURNITURE DESIGN

Apply in person and bring resumé with 2x2 ID picture to:

INTERIORES LTD.
Unit 10 La Fuerza Plaza
Chino Roces Ave., Makati
Interview: January 06, 2003
10 a.m. - 12 noon

FOR HIRING

1. **Secretary**
   Single, Female, age below 25 years old
   College graduate in bus. field
   Independent & good personality
2. **Company Driver**
   Male, age below 30 years old
   With driving exp. over 3 years

Bring necessary documents for interview
Please call Ms. Arlene 671 9663
Technical Master Pasig City

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Accredited performers will showcase their talents in various bustling tourist areas in and around Metro Manila.

Qualifications : Students, Independent Musicians, Freelance artists, etc., aged 18 to 80, Male or Female willing to display his/her talents, skills, and wares in front of crowds. Should be eager to promote his/her craft tirelessly. Must have a sense of duty, national and personal pride and more importantly, must be willing to volunteer for his country.

Salary Range : Shall earn income based on his/her ability to draw crowds and impress spectators. Take home pay can be as much as can fit in a self-provided collection plate.

All qualified applicants are invited to contact Jun Jun Gorda of the Bureau of Domestic Tourism Promotions at 0917-8427039 or 523-8411. You may even e-mail the Secretary of Tourism himself at dick_gordon_tourism@yahoo.com

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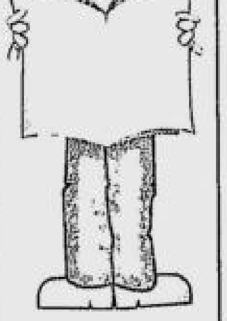

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PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

NOTICE TO DEPOSITORS OF THE CLOSED RURAL BANK OF BISLIG (SURIGAO DEL SUR), INC.

1. Starting January 7, 2003, the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) thru its duly authorized representatives shall receive claims for insured deposits maintained with the closed Rural Bank of Bislig (Surigao del Sur), Inc.
2. Depositors are requested to proceed directly to the premises of the said closed bank from January 7, 2003 to January 16, 2003, Monday thru Fridays, during office hours, where PDIC representatives are stationed to accept claims and entertain queries of depositors.

   After the said dates, all depositors can file their claims personally at the PDIC office from Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., or by mail addressed to –

   The Manager
   Claims Processing Department
   Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation
   2228 Chino Roces Avenue, 1231 Makati City
3. Depositors are advised to present the following requirements to our representatives when filing their claims:
   a. Original evidence of deposit such as Savings Passbook and/or Certificate of Time Deposit; and
   b. Latest identification document (ID) bearing the depositor's signature

   Other documents may be required by our representatives in the course of their processing of claims filed.
4. Pursuant to the provisions of R.A. 3591, as amended, the prescriptive date (last day) for filing of claims for insured deposits in the closed Rural Bank of Bislig (Surigao del Sur), Inc. is on **May 18, 2004.** After **May 18, 2004**, PDIC as insurer, shall no longer accept any claim for insured deposits maintained with the said closed bank.

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

(PDI--Jan. 4 & 5, 2003)

"We are a multinational company based south of Manila inviting experienced 3rd party warehouse/ logistics companies to make a bid to fully manage our raw material warehouse. The warehouse is about 6,000 plus sqm. with around 5,000 SKUs. Please submit your company profile, list of current clientele, services offered to such clientele, performance measures used and pricing scheme/s. We will only respond to Companies that we feel satisfy our requirements. Deadline of submission is on January 15, 2003. Plese e-mail to southcompany2003@yahoo.com"

WWF

WWF, one of the world's leading independent conservation organisations, with a global network active in 100 countries is in need of the following project personnel for the:

WWF SE Asia Freshwater Policy Officer

Title: WWF SE Asia Freshwater Policy Officer
Reports to: SEA Policy Coordinator
Term: Until 31st December 2003. Further extension is dependant on funding and performance.
Remuneration and conditions: Highly competitive in the Philippine NGO community; full-time engagement required

Duties:
Promote policies and programmes for sustainable use and conservation of freshwater ecosystems in the Asia-Pacific Region by regional institutions. In particular, contribute to implementation of the WWF-ADB MOU and engage with ASEAN. Geographically the focus should be the Mekong River Basin, with a secondary focus on other WWF priority rivers in the region, including the Amur, Yangste, Sepik, Indus and Ganga.

Activities:

1. Prepare a 12 month work plan by February 28th for 2003 for approval by the Living Mekong Initiative Steering Group;
2. Report on progress as required to meet the requirements of the contract providing funding from the Living Waters Program Unit, and by the Steering Group and working groups;
3. Liaise with WWF offices in the region to keep abreast of freshwater conservation issues and represent their issues in regional institutions, including participation in the Living Mekong Initiative working groups as necessary;
4. Lead proactive promotion of policies and programmes for: a) implementation of the World Commission on Dams recommendations; b) ecologically, socially and economically acceptable energy supplies; c) conservation of floodplains; d) sustainable river basin management; and e) investing in conservation of freshwater ecosystem health as the source of freshwater for people and nature;
5. Organise high level WWF presentations to and participation in relevant ADB events;
6. Lead efforts to raise concerns and follow up with particular development proposals (such as Mekong Navigation Channel and Nam Theun 2 Dam) with regional institutions (specifically the ADB) and promote alternative, sustainable developments;
7. Prepare required policy, technical and briefing papers;
8. Work with WWF regional communications staff to ensure key issues are raised on the internet and in the media;
9. Prepare an analysis on future work required beyond 2003 by October 2003;
10. Contribute to the sound administration of the SEAPP as required by the Coordinator, including the wider engagement with the ADB.

Personal attributes:
Must be fluent in English. Other languages are an advantage. Must have a tertiary qualification in an appropriate discipline such as biology, geography, politics, economics law or development. The successful applicant will demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of sustainable development and commitment to conservation. The applicant must have excellent advocacy skills. Knowledge of regional institutions and politics is a considerable advantage.

Applications:
Applications should be submitted to Dr. Jose Padilla, SE Asia Policy Coordinator, by Friday, January 10, 2003.

Applications can be sent to:	Jose Padilla
E-mail:	jpadilla@wwf-phil.org.ph
Fax:	+632 426 3927
Postal address:	WWF Philippines LBI Building 57 Kalayaan Ave., Diliman, Quezon City Philippines

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT **DREJ KONSTRAKT, INC.** shall be dissolved and will cease to operate effective January 1, 2003 as unanimously agreed by the majority of its incorporators.

(PDI – Jan. 5, 2003)

ABC

Join the Profitable Espresso Revolution

Allegro Beverage Corporation

Needs:

Account Executives

College graduate, attractive base salary & commission package, food service experience preferred but not necessary.
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OBITUARIES

SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, 2003

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DEADLINE
for reservations / cancellations / corrections
Monday to Sunday
12:00 noon
Day before publication

Avantgarde Shipping Corporation

and

Vships Marine Services Inc.

Announce with deep sorrow the passing of their
Founder, Chairperson, President/CEO

LEVY GARA-REBAMONTAN

on Friday, 03rd of January 2003
at the age of 52

Her beloved children **Mike Edzel** and **Ma. Margaret** (**Yapin**); her sisters **Luz**, **Delia**, **Vilma**, **Teresita**, **Dora**, **Nora**; her brother **Cesar**; relatives, friends and employees request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body now lies in state at the Aguinaldo Chapel, La Funeraria Paz in Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, 08th of January 2003 at 9:30 a.m. after the 8:00 a.m. necrological services.

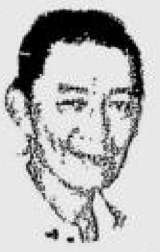
AMELIA JOSE LOS BAÑOS

Died in the Grace of our Lord on January 4, 2003.

Her body lies in state at the Royal Chapel, Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

She is survived by her loving husband **Col. Pete Los Baños (Ret.)**; daughters **Erlinda LB Cajucom** and **Corazon LB Zumel**; son-in-law **Brig. Gen. Jose Maria Carlos Zumel (Ret.)**; grandchildren **Kim & Lt. Sr. Grade Rene Goco (US Navy)**, **Gigi & Lito Pagalilaun**, **Marguerete & Jerome Dumlao**, **Patricia & Cecil Manzano**, **Peter & Gemma Zumel**, **Peter & Elaine Cajucom**, **Joy & Capt. Paul Infante**, **Leah & Capt. Harold Pascua**, **Sigrid & Capt. Aris Gonzales**, **Rica & Capt. Gilbert Ombos**; and great grandchildren. The family, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Interment will be at 10:00 a.m. after the 9:00 a.m. Funeral Mass on Saturday, January 11, 2003, at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City.



In Memoriam

Bienvenido Artiaga Cruz

May 21, 1938 – January 6, 2002

on the occasion of the 1st Death Anniversary

Masses will be offered at the following churches on January 6, 2003:

NUESTRA SEÑORA DE ARANZAZU San Mateo, Rizal	6:00 pm
MOUNT CARMEL CHURCH Doña Juana Rodriguez, Quezon City	6:00 pm
SACRED HEART OF JESUS Hillsborough Subdivision, Alabang	6:00 am
ST. BENEDICT CHAPEL Alabang Hills Subdivision	6:30 pm
ST. JEROME EMILLIANI & STA. SUSANA Alabang Town Center	6:00 pm
SAN ANTONIO MA. CLARET PARISH CHURCH Zamboanga City	6:00 pm

Message of Thanks
We, the family of the late

Col. EUSEBIO C. CORDERO

who passed away on Dec. 2, 2002

wish to express our sincerest gratitude to all those who comforted us with their presence, sent flowers and spiritual offerings, kept vigil with us and attended the funeral rites in immeasurable ways when they're there for us when we need it most.

ATTY. LIMNEO LAUREL PLATON

TALISAY, BATANGAS

At age 81, he peacefully joined his Creator
and his wife **Gregoria** (†)
on January 2, 2003

His loving children, **Rene** & **Vida**, **Marito** & **Cherrie**, **Gigi** & **Arlene**, **Maritess** & **Ebuen** and **Carolyn** & **Eddie-Boy**; his sister **Purificacion** (†); his bereaved spouse **Thelma** & their children **Tet** & **Nixon**, **Elaine** & **Joseph**, **Anthony** & **Wally**, grandchildren and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington East,
The Garden Chapels, Pasig City.

Interment will
be announced later.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring.. **INQUIRER OBITUARIES** OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS • DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS • FREE OBIT DESIGN

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OFC/ADMIN STAF 18-45y/o w/ w/o Exp 9121488 Clifford

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

CAREGIVER TRNG 5278418

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of the late Presentacion S. Victorio who died intestate was extrajudicially settled by her heirs as per Doc.#491 Page# 100 Book# 19 Series of 2002 before Notary Public Dolorsindo Paner of Manila City
(PDI-Dec.29,2002,Jan.5&12,2003)

PERSONAL

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- Must have a good established network of clients

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- 22 to 26 years old

Submit your bio-data or resumé to:
Chris Sports Plaza
3/F K-Plaza Building
18 Kamuning Road, Quezon City

OBITUARIES

"Let the words of my mouth meet your Favor, keep the thoughts of my heart before you, Lord, my rock, my redeemer..."
Psalm 21:15

MESSAGE OF THANKS

The family of the late

MILAGROS A. GERMAN

who returned to her Creator on December 24, 2002

sincerely convey their deepest gratitude and appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy, visited her in state and kept vigil, joined the funeral Mass and services, and those who, in one way or another, consoled them in their hours of bereavement.

Please remember her once in a while.

Thank you for the gift of life and the blessing to be among those who know You are the Son of God.

We love you and will miss you so very much!

Juliana de Guzman Viloria

Born: November 15, 1922

of Laur, N.E. & Cabanatuan City & Maryland, USA

Peacefully joined our Lord on January 3, 2003 at the age of 80.

Husband **Conrado** (†); children **Aurora & Jaime Pajarillaga, Zenaida, Manuel & Araceli, Elnora & Eusebio Rapanot, Edgardo & Marilyn, Julie** and **David Williams, Mariles, Conrado Jr. & Lourdes**; sisters **Mercedes & Remedios**; grandchildren & great grandchildren, relatives & friends request those whose lives she touched to join them in praising God for her life now in the company of her Beloved Creator.

Her remains lie in state at the Ilagan Funeral Chapel, Burgos St. corner Zulueta St. Cabanatuan City and will be transferred at the Viloria residence in Laur, Nueva Ecija at eight o'clock a.m., Monday, January 06, 2003.

Interment will be on Wednesday, January 08, 2003 after the 10:00 a.m. Mass at the St. Stephen Catholic Church, Laur, Nueva Ecija.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the **KALINGA** Ministry for the Beloved Foundation and/or to the **GIDEONS** International in the Philippines will be appreciated.

Tribute honoring Juliana:
Sunday, January 05, 2003, 7:30 p.m., ILAGAN Chapel, Cabanatuan City
Tuesday, January 07, 2003, 7:30 p.m., VILORIA res. Laur, N.E.

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811-4370

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MEGAMALL
635-0219, 635-0220

"We have passed from death to life because we love each other."
1 John 3:14

Our Beloved Tatang

JOSE "PEPING" VALENCIA GUANZON

Peacefully joined his Creator and wife Nunelon Guanzon on January 02, 2003 at the age of 84.

His bereaved family, children **Corazon & Jesus Bata, Amado & Norma Guanzon, Dulce & Edwin Castro**; grandchildren **Jonel Carlos, Jerico & Katrina Bata, Jonel & Kristine Guanzon, Marinelle & Joseph Dominic Castro**, brothers & sisters request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Castro Residence, San Matias, Sta. Rita, Pampanga.

Interment will be on Wednesday, January 8, 2003, at the Sta. Rita Cemetery, immediately following the 3:00 p.m. Mass at Sta. Rita Parish Church.

In Loving Memory

JOSE DINIO CORONEL

(December 16, 1911 - June 12, 1954)
of Floridablanca, Pampanga

JULIANA SILVA VICTORIA CORONEL

(February 16, 1913 - January 5, 1993)
of Macabebe & Floridablanca

and their eldest son

ANTONIO VICTORIA CORONEL

(December 7, 1937 - December 30, 1969)
of Floridablanca & Bamban, Tarlac

Holy Mass will be offered today at:

St. Joseph Parish Church, *Floridablanca*	7:30 AM
San Nicolas de Tolentino Parish Church, *Macabebe*	6:00 AM
Sacred Heart Parish Church, *Alabang Hills, Muntinlupa*	8:00 AM
Holy Eucharist Parish Church, *Moonwalk, Parañaque City*	6:30 AM
Sto. Niño Parish Church, *Bamban, Tarlac*	6:00 AM
Sta. Teresita Parish Church, *Mayon, Sta. Mesa Heights, Q.C.*	9:00 AM
Immaculate Conception Parish Church, *Dasmariñas, Cavite*	7:00 AM
Sto. Rosario Parish Church, *Balabag, Boracay, Aklan*	4:00 PM

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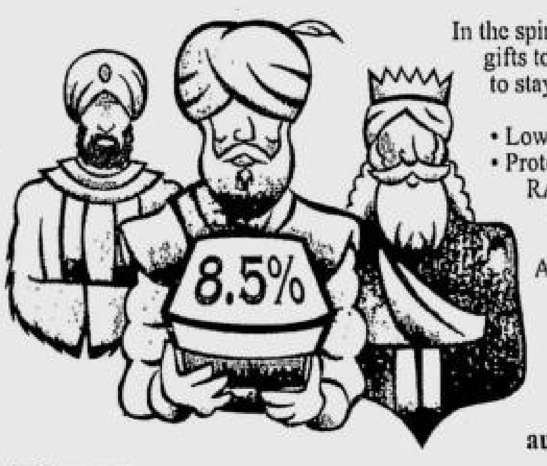

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Insight Vacations launches 2003 Escorted Journeys brochures

INSIGHT Vacations' 2003 Europe & Britain Premium First Class Escorted Journeys brochure has hit the shelves in travel agencies and boasts 57 tours, including eight all-new tours and more leisure two and three-night stops than ever before.

Premium First Class Escorted Journeys are offered in the following categories: Britain and Europe, European Discovery Tours, Regional European Tours, and Ancient Civilization tours and cruises.

Each Insight itinerary is meticulously planned to include the most important sightseeing experiences everyday. City tours with expert local guides, river cruises, walking tours, entrances to famous sights and special excursions are just a few examples of what you'll find included on each itinerary.

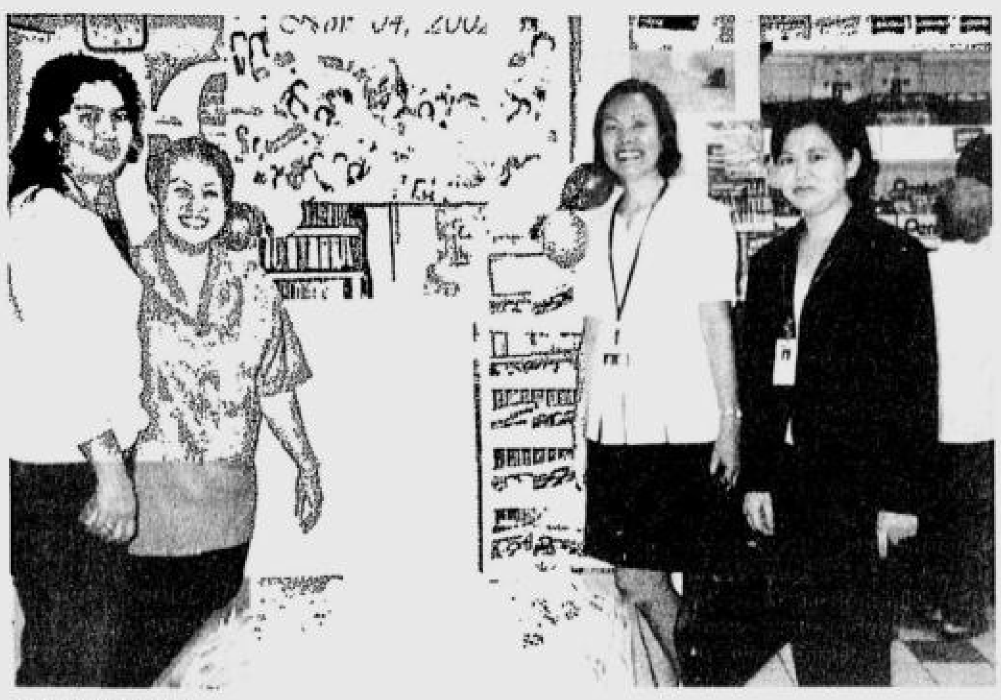
Insight Vacations gives you the freedom and flexibility to explore the very heart of the world's most exciting destinations. Its premium first-class hotels are superbly located, giving travelers easy access to the treasures of each region. The quality, value and service provided by Insight Vacations create holiday memories that last a lifetime.

Insight Vacations, on its 25th year, has also announced the launch of its new SuperSaver program. This offers first-class touring at budget prices. This offer includes two new brochures for 2003: SuperSaver America & Canada and SuperSaver Europe & Britain.

Robin Yap, regional director for Asia of Insight Vacations, said, "Previously, travelers had a choice between first-class tours or budget tours with nothing in between. Insight has listened to the market and developed a totally new alternative—SuperSaver—which offers first-class touring but on a budget. So now, travelers on any budget can enjoy the Insight experience for their holiday of a lifetime."

Insight Vacations' new SuperSaver program includes excellent guided city and orientation tours in each of the highlighted destinations, plus plenty of free time to enjoy optional premium excursions. Also included are continental breakfasts daily, three course dinners and Insight tour directors.

With SuperSaver, unlike budget tours, instead of doing everything on a budget, passengers will enjoy first-class city and resort hotels which are conveniently located, and travel on a modern fleet of comfortable motorcoaches.



MSV DRAW

DTI representative Elvie Sagat (second from left) is seen with Heidee Yumul and Dottie Pineda of Bookware Publishing Corporation and Dolores Valencia, branch manager of Expressions (Commonwealth), during the recent monthly draw of 'Nokia 8310 Raffle Promo'. For the readers of My Special Valentine (MSV) pocketbooks, the lucky winner here is Jennifer Ibanez of Lucena City. The said promo will last up to February 2003. For inquiries, call tel. nos. 631-8893-94.

Tacloban City Lions Club, Inquirer sponsor hoop clinic

INQUIRER provincial circulation manager Rene Langahin (right) receives a certificate of appreciation from Montejo for being one of the sponsors of the basketball clinic during the club's dinner meeting.

SOME of the hundreds of participants of the basketball clinic wear Inquirer T-shirts while waiting for the arrival of the players of the Purefoods Tender Juicy Hotdogs.

Merry Christmas
Welcome to

PBA'S Purefoods Tender Juicy Hotdogs players and coaches generously shared their time and talent. Headed by coach Eric Altamirano (2nd from right) and assistant coach Ryan Gregorio (4th from right), the players were (standing, from left), Leyte's Rey Evangelista, Chris Cantonjos, Boyet Fernandez and Ronnie Magsanoc.

THE TACLOBAN City Lions Club, in cooperation with the Philippine Daily Inquirer, sponsored a basketball clinic for the youth recently. It was participated in by the different schools and barangays of Tacloban City. Incumbent Lions Club president Neil Montejo (center) said the project was geared to develop sports awareness and education as a contribution to the city government's and PNP's drive against drug addiction. The project was also co-sponsored by the city government through Mayor Alfredo "Bejo" Romualdez.

Aspiras highway marker unveiled at Agoo junction

THE ALTERNATIVE route of the Agoo-Tubao-Pugo section in La Union towards Baguio City has been named the Jose D. Aspiras Highway in memory of the son of Agoo who, for more than three decades, dedicated his life to public service in key positions in the government.

A commemorative marker at the Agoo junction towards Baguio connecting the Province of La Union and the Cordillera region was recently unveiled in the presence of the people of La Union, members of the local government and the Aspiras family led by the widow, Amparo, and children Aida, Babot, Jose, Cristy, Vicky and Reggie.

Aspiras represented Region I of the Interim Batasang Pambansa, the Batasang Pambansa as well as the 2nd district of La Union for three terms in Congress.

At the time of his demise, he was the Philippine representative to Taiwan with the rank of Ambassador.

During his stint as Secretary of Tourism, he conceived and finally implemented the Agoo-Tubao-Pugo road as an access highway between Ilocandia and the Cordilleras that provided an efficient link for commuters, road services and the promotion of tourism in the North.

The renaming of the highway was proposed in House Bill 8791 by former Representative (now Baguio City Mayor) Bernard N. Vergara. It was enacted into law as RA 8971 on Oct. 30, 2000 during the third regular session of the Congress with the approval of Senate President Franklin M. Drilon, House Speaker (now Senator Manuel B. Villar) and former President Joseph E. Estrada.

1st
SK Federation Cup
2002
Inter-Barangay
Basketball League
1st
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H-FACTOR LAGUNA SPONSORS HOOP TOURNEY

Leo Hadi of H-Factor Laguna recently sponsored the opening of the SK Binan Basketball League Dec. 28 at the Binan Sports Complex. Gracing the ceremonies were Laguna Vice Governor Dan Fernandez, Camille Roxas, and Rita Magdalena.

BITS Clips

QC Jaycees induction set

THE QUEZON Capitol Jaycees will induct its new set of directors on Jan. 9 at the Celebrity Sports Plaza in Quezon City. Elected president is Noel Roberto "Obet" Escueta. Other officers to be inducted are Reuben Romulo, executive VP, JV Medina, VP-development, John Calub, VP-programs, Alan Yam, VP-finance, Harvey Buena, secretary general, Louie Morales, treasurer, and directors Bong Banal, leadership development, Roy Garcia, youth welfare, Edwin Marcos, membership, Marlon Mercado, government affairs, Joey Romblon, international affairs, Bong del Rosario, ways and means, Dondon Soliven, chapter extension, and TJ Tajonera, community development. The Quezon City Capitol Jaycees Inc. was chartered in 1959, and is a well-known chapter of the Philippine Jaycees.

PWU reunion at Manila Hotel

THE PHILIPPINE Women's University, now on it's 83rd year, will hold its 2003 Grand Reunion on Feb. 22 at 1 p.m. at the Manila Hotel. This is one of the highlights of University Week, which begins Feb. 19. Heading the Jubilarians is chair of the PWU board of trustees Dr. Helena Z. Benitez. With the theme "Come Home, Philwomenian", honorees for this year are alumni and graduates from all levels, from classes ending in the years 3 and 8. Overall chair Olivia Montecillo Villafuerte enjoins all Philwomenians to join and make this another historical PWU event. For inquiries and details, all Philwomenians and alumni can call Rachel at the Alumni Association landline at 526-8421 loc. 123, or 524-2610, or e-mail rachel_097@yahoo.com; celeste@i-manila.com.ph; oceleste92@yahoo.com.

Groove endurance at the Sony Net MD Music Marathon

MOVE and groove endurances were tested at the Sony Net MD Music Marathon Grand Showdown Dec. 28 at Club 5, Amorsolo Street, Makati City.

All partyphiles were invited witnessed the finals of this mass dance marathon. The fun began at 9 p.m. and continued into the wee hours of the morning. The grand showdown capped the Sony Net MD Music Marathon's series of dance marathons held in various bars throughout December.

As pair contestants strutted their stuff for two hours, the last pair remaining on the dance floor was declared the winner, and each received the Sony Net MD Walkman.

Aside from enjoying the dance marathon, bar patrons checked out the Net MD Walkman booth where they listened to downloaded music or joined the Name That Tune contest. Each participant who correctly guessed the title of a randomly selected song won a special prize.

Don Henrico's anniversary promo

DON HENRICO'S Malate and West Avenue lets everyone enjoy good food, get good value, plus the chance to taste the good life. In the anniversary raffle promo Rediscover Don Henrico's Malate and West Avenue, every P1,000 purchase (dine-in, take out or delivery, party reservations) earns one raffle coupon. Lots of prizes are at stake, ranging from magazine subscriptions, spa and reflexology treatments, CDs, to weekend getaways at prime hotels and resorts all over the country, including the two grand prizes of a 3-day vacation for two at Plantation Bay. Don't miss this chance to enjoy the food life now. Raffle period is ongoing until Jan. 15. Don Henrico' s Malate is at the 2nd floor of Salud Building along Pedro Gil corner A. Mabini Street, Malate, Manila and Don Henrico's West Avenue is at the corner of Examiner Street and West Avenue, Quezon City.

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Riding through pipings of garments business

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

PINOY ENTREPRENEUR

WHEN Victor Tan decided to set up his own clothing line 15 years ago, the long and short of the garments business was so much simpler.

Tan was exposed to the business at an early age as his father was a garments exporter for over two decades. It was therefore natural for him to go into the same line.

With his penchant for clothes and love for travel, he came up with the brand Bobson, actually an existing popular casual clothes line in Japan.

When it started in 1987, Crolific Garments Mfg. Corp. only had about 10 employees and the number of players in the industry was small. Today it has about 250 employees plus the same number of "frontliners" or those who tend to the outlets.

The system then was that the department stores bought the clothes outright but the repayment period was long.

For the first few years, Bobson quietly captured its own loyal followers. The only marketing effort it undertook was dress up personalities like model Joey Mead and former actress Nanette Medved.

That plus its presence in SM department stores was its only awareness creation moves.

Tan however points out that three major changes market the garments industry in the past decade.

Outright sale to concession

First was the shift from outright sale to concession. Its first concession was in SM Manila in 1989 and then the Robinsons Department Store in 1990.

The shift was prompted by a firm which wanted to penetrate the market and make sure that department stores carried its line.

Thus they offered that the stores will only pay them for what they sell less the commission of course.

"This created a shake-up," Tan recalls.

The department stores liked the scheme and pretty soon imposed the system to its other suppliers.

The change had its advantages and disadvantages—repayment period was shorter but inventory management had to be given more emphasis.

Designs

The next change that came about was the increased attention consumers gave to design.

This was largely due to the influx of foreign brands particularly when the peso exchange rate dropped to P26:$1.

Local makers realized they had to compete with the trendier foreign brands.

"Many brands came in and we were required to do research. In the '80s it was just "*gaya-gaya*" but suddenly it was a game of who'll be the trendsetter," Tan says.

He says Bobson beefed up its research by attending design seminars with the Designer Center of the Philippines, going abroad and doing merchandising.

But a turning point for the clothes firm was getting Aga Muhlach as endorser.

Crolific marketing manager Manolette Tizon says getting Aga "strengthened the brand. It was a good call, it created recalls of the brand and bargaining power among the stores."

But it still had limited marketing budget and and it resorted to billboards and some print ads.

Tan says Aga had been his friend for years and he would regularly send Bobson clothes to him.

He says Aga would even give his own comments about the designs of the clothes.

Aga was tapped in 1999 and goes on a two year contract. Recently Bobson also got "yogurt girl" Nancy Castiglione for its ladies' wear.

China invasion

The other development in the garments industry is what some have termed the "China invasion" wherein very cheap goods from China have been coming into the country posing stiff competition to local manufacturers. Some of taken advantage of the low production cost in the Communist country and have outsourced the manufacture of their clothes.

Tan says Bobson subcontracts about 30 percent of its production to China and India. The balance is manufactured in the country.

Plans

There is also a trend wherein many department-store based brands "graduate" and put up free standing stores.

This is what Bobson is planning to get into.

Tan says they want to set up 20 free standing stores this year.

Bobson has 17 boutiques all over the country. The first one was in Tutuban Center.

But it has at present over 100 outlets.

Tan says they will infuse fresh capital into the firm.

Other than increasing its boutiques, Tan also plans to expand the product line of Bobson to include undergarments and fragrances.

He believes that the bottom line in every business is hardwork.

"And sincerity—I do not hide anything," he says.

Tan used to have partners, now his brothers and sisters and wife help him run the business.

Like most entrepreneurs he started as a one-man show—doing everything from design, purchasing and marketing.

He admits that competition is stiff but he wants to become bigger and put systems in place to achieve better efficiency.

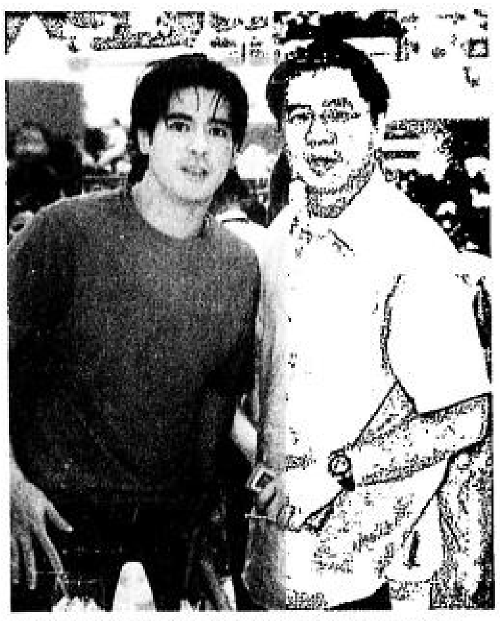
Despite his minimal marketing effort, Tan claims sales over the past five years have been on the uptrend by 15 percent to 20 percent.

Bobson is strong in the provinces.

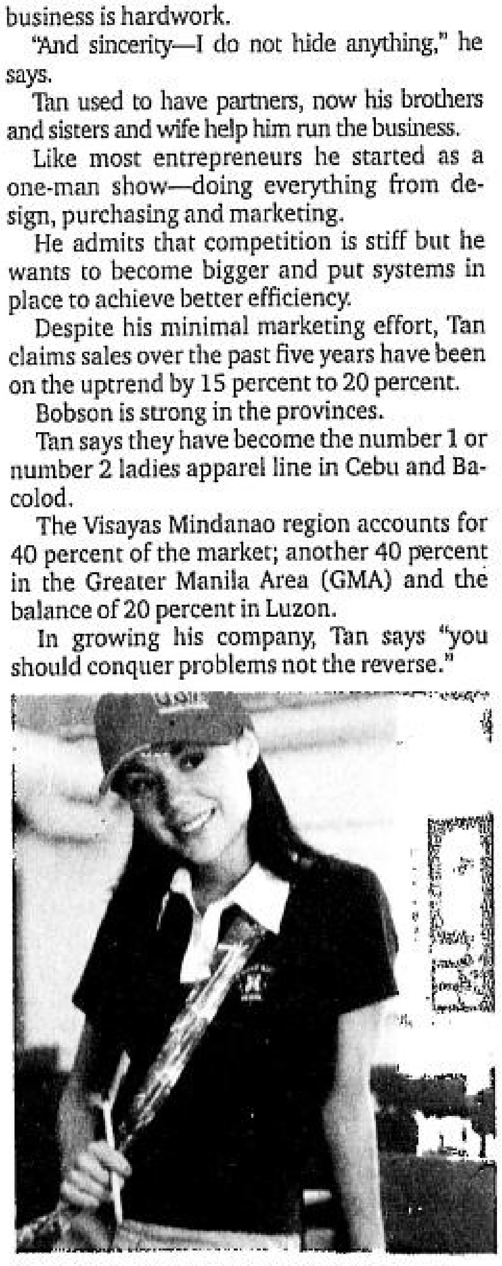
Tan says they have become the number 1 or number 2 ladies apparel line in Cebu and Bacolod.

The Visayas Mindanao region accounts for 40 percent of the market; another 40 percent in the Greater Manila Area (GMA) and the balance of 20 percent in Luzon.

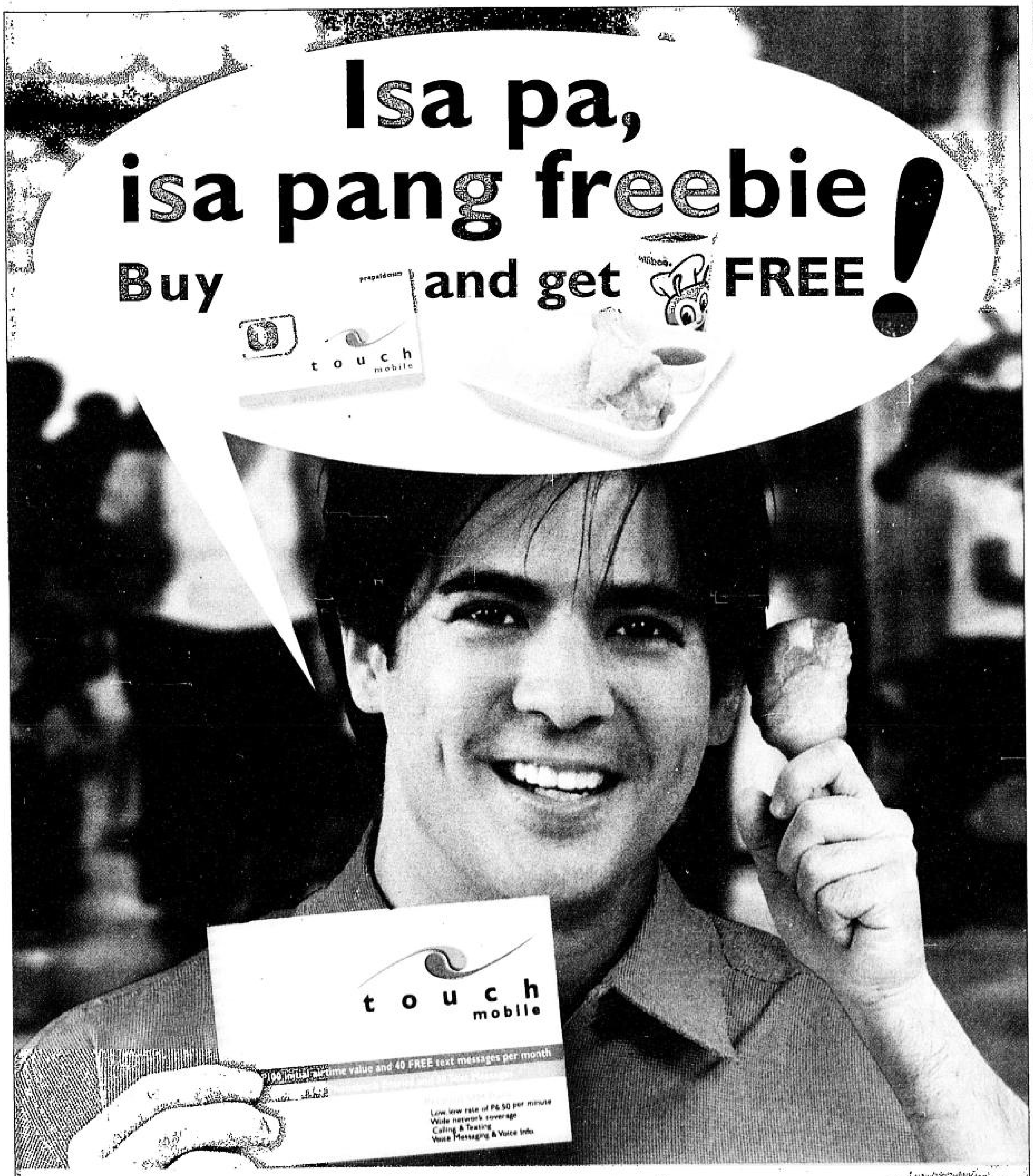
In growing his company, Tan says "you should conquer problems not the reverse."



AGA Muhlach with Crolific CEO Victor Tan



NANCY Castiglione models for its ladies' wear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Sunday LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

DIGITAL ART BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Top Ten reasons GMA is not running for President in 2004

In the tradition of 'Late Show with David Letterman,' here's why President Macapagal-Arroyo won't be joining the presidential race in the next election

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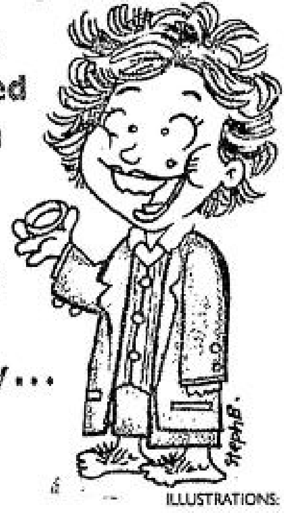
Compiled by the Lifestyle staff

10 After holding her first grandchild, she rediscovered how much fun it is to have a baby around the house so she is planning to have one by 2004.

9 With Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones, she has signed a multimillion-dollar deal as international endorser for Ray-Ban.

8 She has accepted a plum role in 'Lord of the Rings 3' that will establish her status in world history . . . (Take a wild guess which role.)



ILLUSTRATIONS: STEPH BRAVO

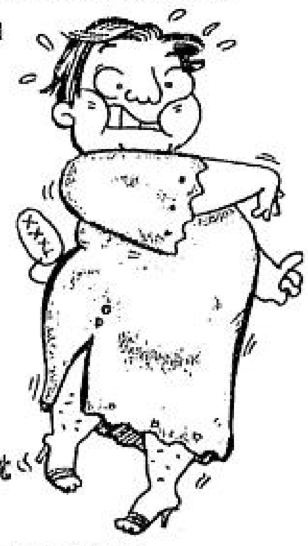
7 She will let Bong Revilla run against FPJ since natalo na ni Kap ang Lawin sa box office.

6 Loren Legarda's magician husband might make her disappear . . . poof!

5 Her applebox-toting Girl Friday has been pirated by Sen. Juan Flavier to elevate his own political ambitions.

4 She is moving to the USA to open a chain of Lavandera Kos with Mark Jimenez.

3 She has realized that Susan Roces as First Lady looks better in a terno than Mike Arroyo.



2 She cannot bear the thought of chucking her Inno Sotto suits for those stupid Nepa Q Hawaiian shirts just to beat Raul Roco.

And the No. 1 reason GMA is not running in 2004 is . . .

1 She wants more time for sex, sex and nothing but sex, so help her God.

Got your own version? Have something to add? Text us at (0919) 880-3354 or e-mail us at pr_lifestyle.inquirer.com.ph.

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DEMON in the dragon dance

COLORFUL, ostentatious costumes such as worn above and left are hallmarks of kabuki shows.

KIYOE Fujinaka uses Shironui, a special cosmetic for kabuki actors.

Kabuki wows audiences in Manila, Davao

Japan's traditional theater form is a visual feast of elaborate stage effects and beautiful costumes

Photos by Mandy Navasero

PETRON recently brought over to the country the Manjushaka Voluntary Arts Group to introduce to the audiences in Manila and Davao the magic of Japan's Kabuki theater tradition.

The modern kabuki is a 2 1/2- hour stage play that showcases the various aspects of Japanese culture through beautiful costumes, dance numbers and special visual effects.

Manjushaka usually gives benefit shows to children of adversity. The group has so far staged 108 charity performances in and outside of Japan.

Manjushaka refers to a legendary white flower that is supposed to grow only in heaven. It connotes spiritual power.

Petron Corporation sponsored the performances through the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

Manjushaka presented 11 performances before capacity crowds at the CAP Theater in Davao City and the UP Theater in Diliman, Q.C.

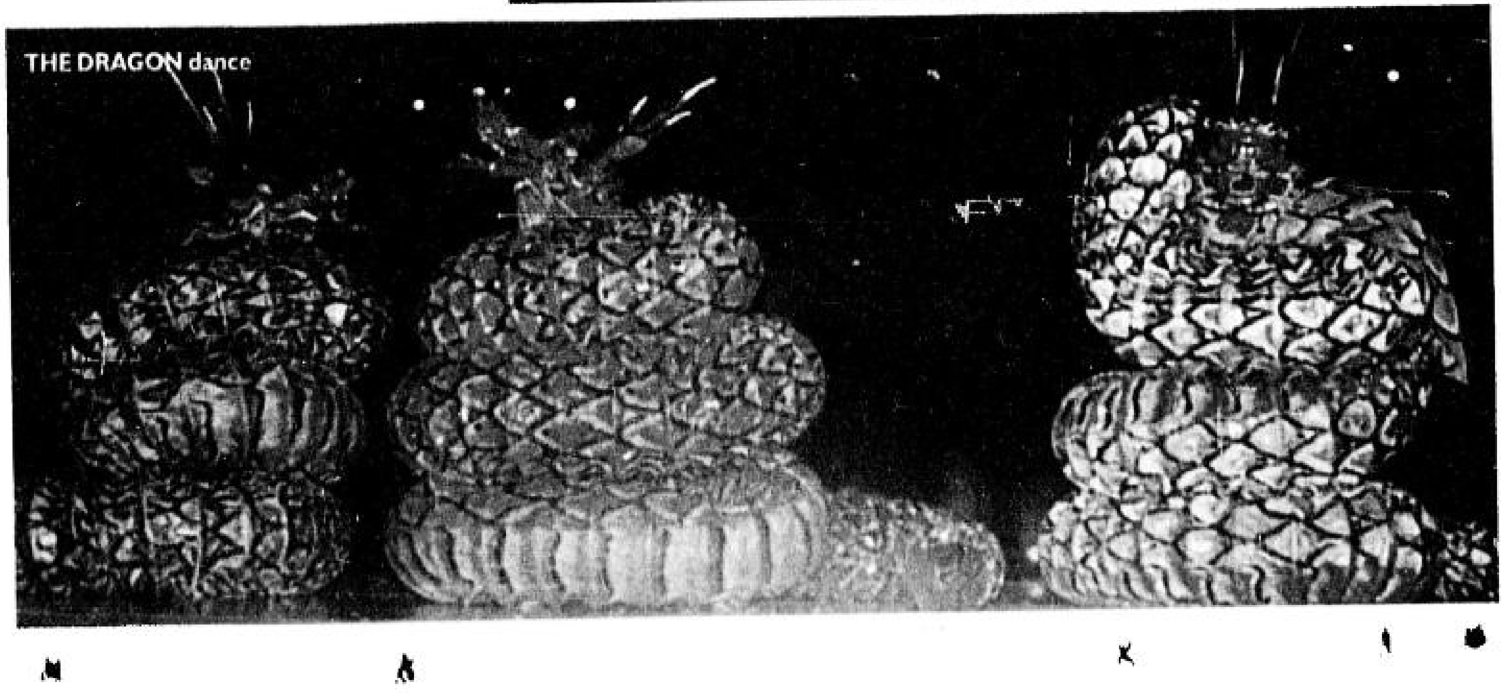
Social Welfare Secretary Corazon J. Soliman graced the opening night performance. Also at the opening show was Petron Foundation executive director Malu Erni, the president of the League of Corporate Foundations.

The kabuki was part of Project Joy, Petron's annual Christmas gift-giving program for poor young people. Senior citizens and the disabled were also treated to the performances.

MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE C3

OIRAN SHOW. Oiran is the highest rank of geishas.

AMAZING Grace



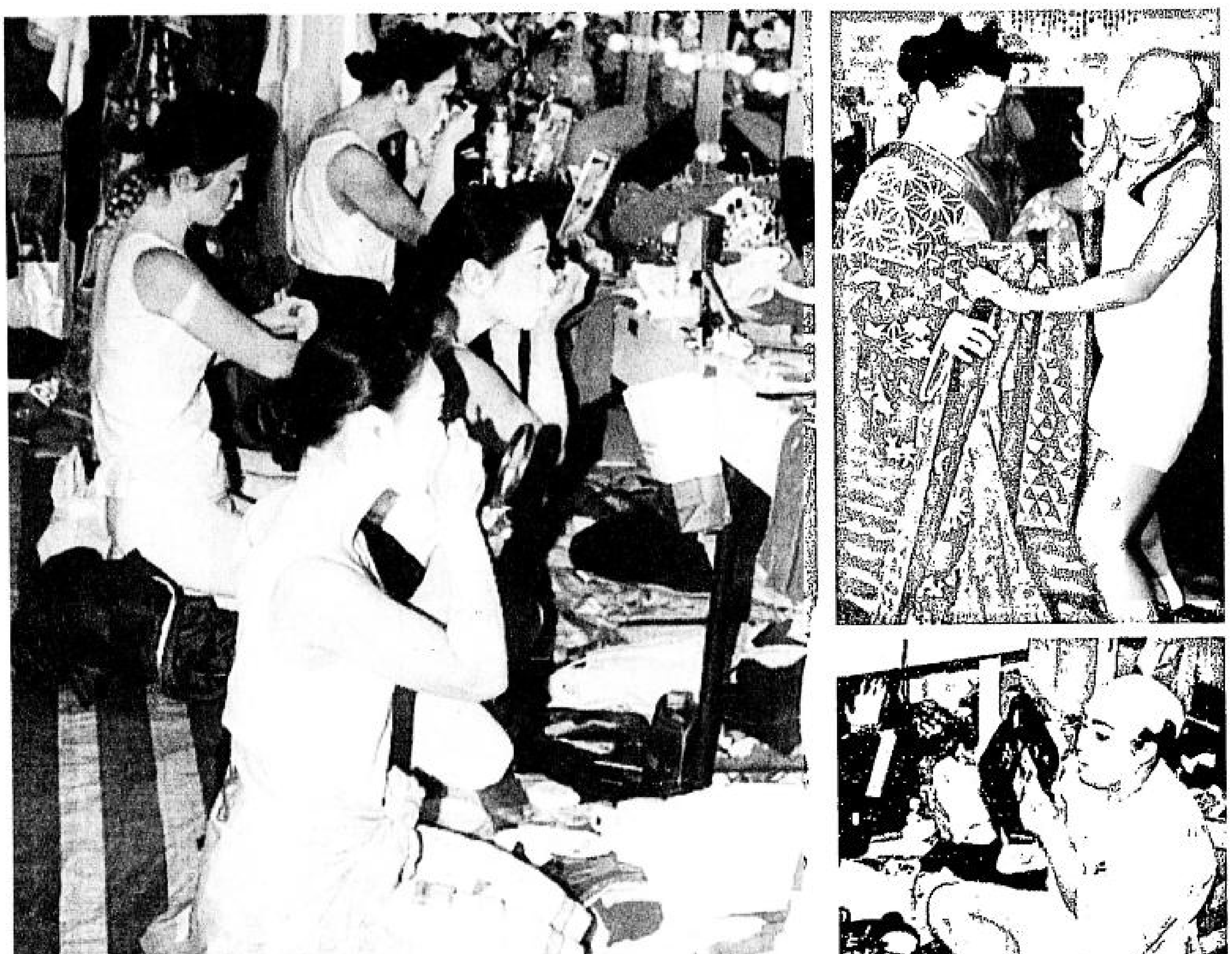
THE DRAGON dance

THE MANJUSHAKA dancers with the Petron volunteers

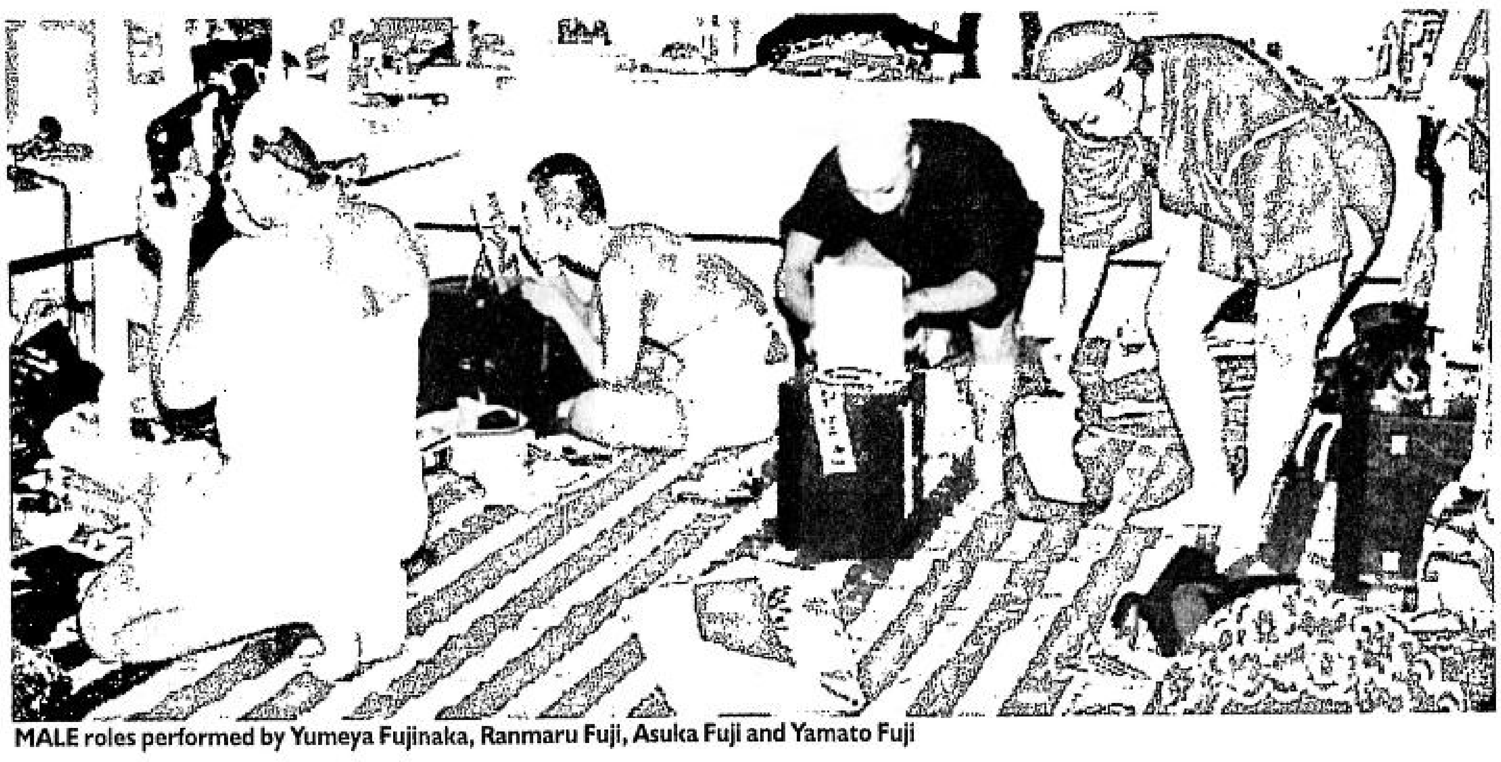
FROM left: Petron VP for finance and subsidiaries Antonio G. Pelayo; Petron manager for human relations and development Ana C. Mendoza; Kioe Fujinaka, founder and leader of the Manjushaka Performing Arts Group; Malu G. Erni, executive director of Petron Foundation and president of the League of Corporate Foundations; and Dr. Cresencio M. Montalbo Jr., U.P. School of Urban and Regional Planning

Kabuki wows audiences in Manila, Davao

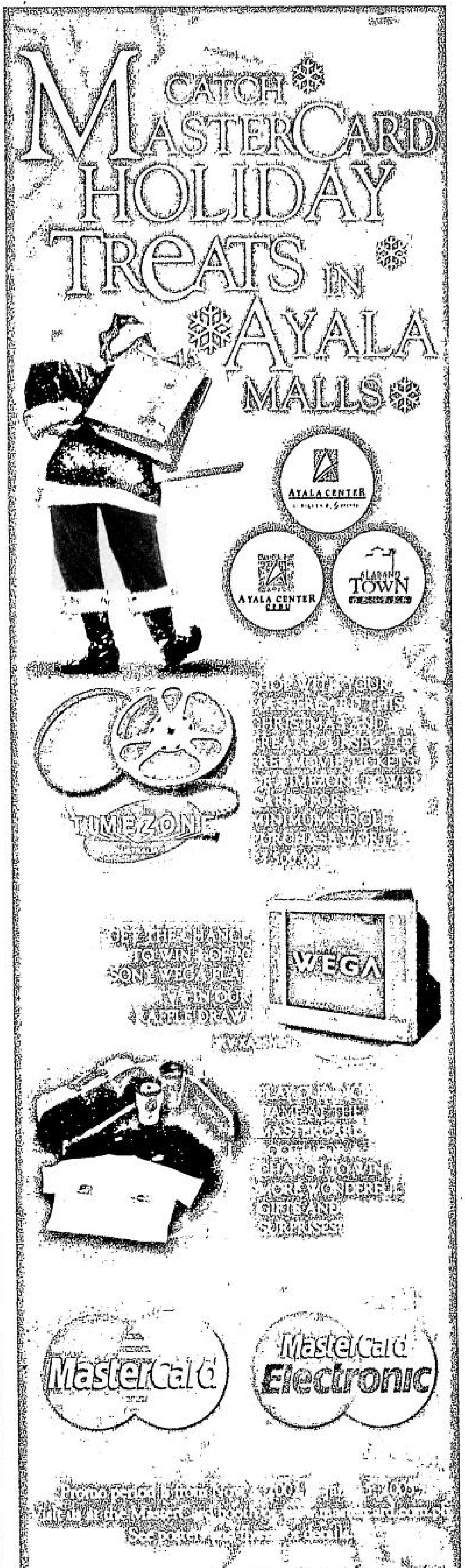
From page C2



DRESSING ROOM scenes (clockwise from above) Kimono girls Ran Kazuki, Komachi Kazuki, Mari Kazuki Yume Hanazono and Orie Fujinaka; helping a fellow actor don the obi; putting on white makeup



MALE roles performed by Yumeya Fujinaka, Ranmaru Fuji, Asuka Fuji and Yamato Fuji



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Trend & Style

Philippine Retail Brands
by Bayo, Bench, Plains and Prints, Sari-Sari and T Salvador
January 09, 2003, 11:30 am

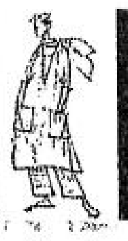
"Manila Wear"
by Fashion and Design Council of the Philippines
January 09, 2003, 7:30 pm

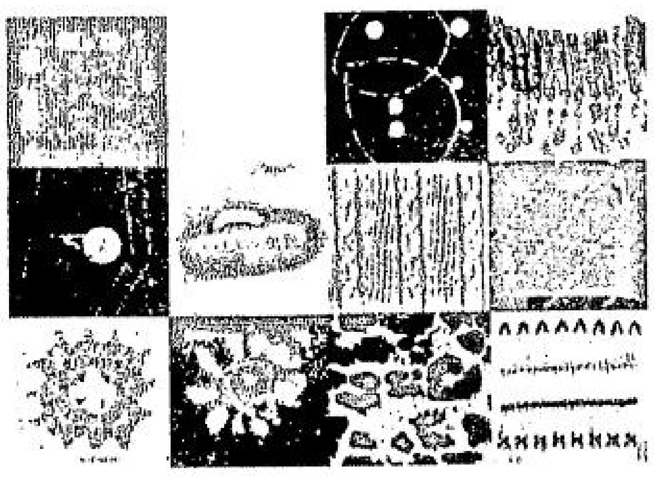
Other Activities

ASEAN Federation of Textile Industries (AFTEX)
19th Council Meeting and 17th Plenary Meeting
08 January 2003, 9:00 - 6:00 pm
10 January 2003, 9:00 - 12:00 nn
Harana Ballroom, Hyatt Regency Manila

Seminars & Workshops

- **Fashion Forecast for Spring/Summer 2004**
  by Cotton Council International and Cotton Incorporated
  January 09, 2003, 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm
- **Economic Outlook and Consumer Lifestyle Monitoring**
  by Cotton Council International and Cotton Incorporated
  January 10, 2003, 10:00 am – 12:00 nn
- **CEO Forum: Meeting the Challenges**
  January 10, 2003, 12:30 pm- 4:00 pm
  "Deconstructing The Old Manufacturing Sytem: A Global Perspective"
  by Willie Tan, Exec. Vice-President for Luen Thai International Group and President, Philippine Luen Thai Holdings
  "UK Industry Retail Trends and Europe"
  by Manny Silverman, Co-Chairman Philippine-British Council's Retail / Consumer Goods Group
- **Controlling Competition, Promoting Profit**
  by General Sewing Data, Inc.
  January 11, 2003, 10:00 am – 11:30 am
- **Saving with SAHL**
  by SAHL Sewing Services
  January 11, 2003, 11:30 am-12 nn
- **Effective Production and Planning Control**
  by Fast React Asia Limited
  January 11, 2003, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm
- **A Systematic Approach Towards Productivity Improvement**
  by Apparel Solutions Asia Co., Ltd. (APSA)
  January 11, 2003, 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm





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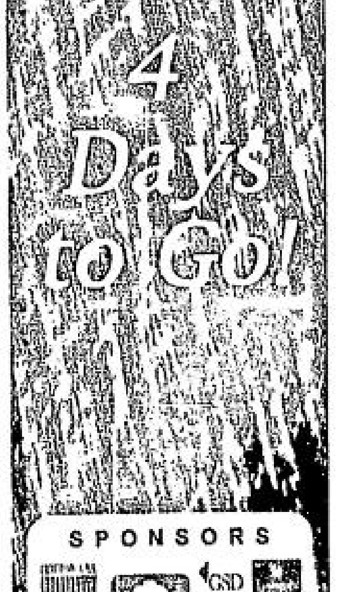

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Malls bring together holy and ordinary

By Christine Gomez
Contributor

"I REALIZED that everything that we do, as long as we do it with the thought of serving God, is a form of praying and serving the Lord."

"I liked the idea of transforming our daily activities to God's work."

"I was here in the exhibit because God has a message for me: to deepen my spiritual life and personal relationship with Him especially in my professional life."

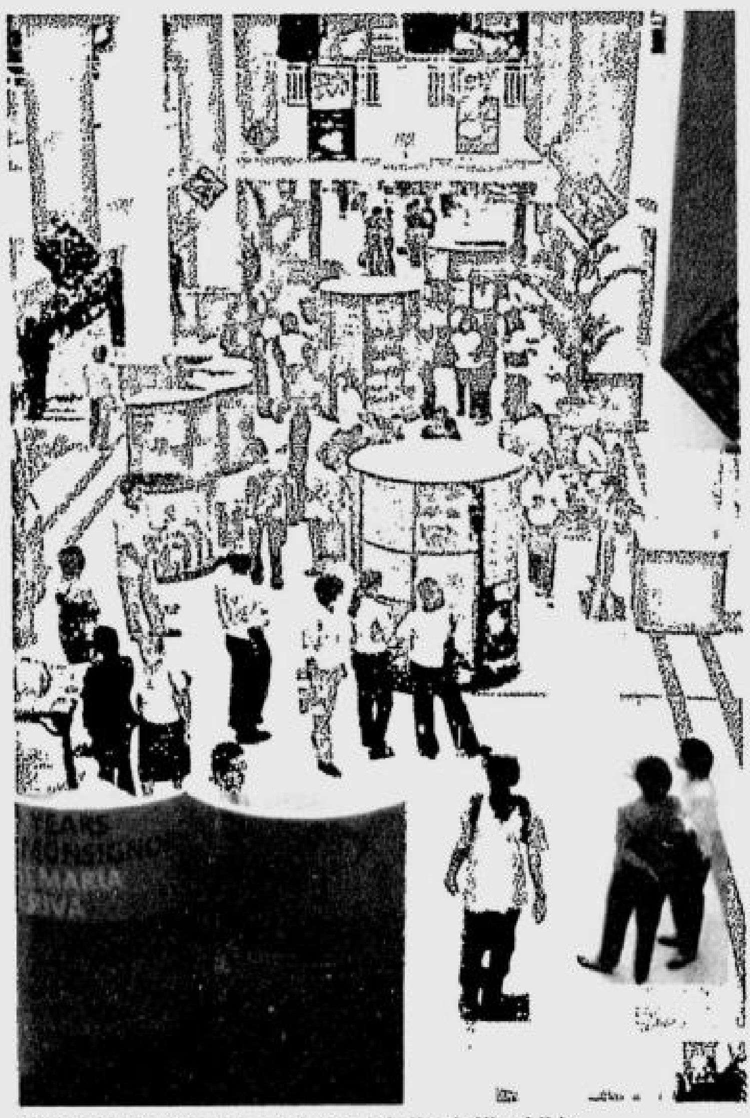
"Our world needs more persons like him to help mankind have a better life."

One or two-liners like these filled the guest books of the exhibit "100 years of Monsignor Josemaría Escrivá," mounted in several malls all over the country since January last year.

The exhibit was about the life and works of a man who preached something extraordinary: that holiness can be found in the ordinary. Josemaría Escrivá, a native of Barbastro, Spain, was made the 468th saint of the Catholic Church by Pope John Paul II.

The interactive exhibit blended well with its various venues not so much for its structure as for its message: "There is something holy, something divine in your ordinary, everyday life and it is up to you to discover it." (Josemaría Escrivá, Homily, Passionately Loving the World, 1967).

> New Saint Josemaría Escrivá preached that holiness could be found in the ordinary


"100 YEARS of Monsignor Josemaría Escrivá" exhibit

In the malls, as people strolled, hurried past, shopped or went through the hundred and one tasks of the day, the figure of Saint Josemaría Escrivá reminded them that commonplace things were points of encounter with God.

The message of the new saint is very timely for today's fast-paced society. It is a reminder to transcend the demands of everyday life and to see the big picture. Each person can spend his or her time working and serving others not through extraordinary acts but through ordinary deeds done with love and faith. Happiness is then achieved because God is found, through those deeds.

Miracles of faith

A *balut* vendor returned to the exhibit with fellow-vendors. They asked her for prayer cards when she was able to sell an entire basket of *balut* after praying to St. Josemaría.

A security officer suddenly softened his stance when he realized that St. Josemaría was the author of "The Way," the book he treasured all his life, his source of light and hope in the darkest moments.

A nun said she would be eternally grateful to St. Josemaría because reading his works sustained her through a difficult period in her life as a religious.

A young mother-to-be put the "ancient" telephone receiver—used by the saint in his office—on her stomach as she asked St. Josemaría for a safe pregnancy.

BOOKS FOR SALE

BOOKS on the life of Josemaría Escrivá are on sale at the malls.

In its 12-month travel to many parts of the Philippines, the exhibit on St. Josemaría gave many Filipinos a chance to know him and experience his powerful intercession. Cures, jobs, solution to personal conflicts and financial difficulties—these were some of the things asked of the saint. Many visitors were simply glad to be in touch with St. Josemaría after many years of not having contact with him or with members of Opus Dei, the personal Catholic Church prelature he founded.

This is not to say that St. Josemaría is a miracle worker. Throughout his life, he did not want to talk of miracles or extraordinary events. He kept saying that the only miracles he knew were those in the gospel. For him, the great miracle was when people did ordinary things well.

The fact that he has granted many favors is proof of his closeness to God, the one granting the petitions. It reinforces the Catholic doctrine on sainthood: saints are friends of God who have lived holy lives while on earth and who are powerful intercessors before the Almighty because of this.

Those who had known St. Josemaría in his lifetime and those who shared his spirit would attest that all the saint would ask in return for favors was to keep the message he untiringly preached: Be holy wherever you are, in whatever you do, by doing what you should and doing it for love of God and souls.

On Jan. 9, at 6 p.m., a Solemn Mass will be celebrated at the Manila Cathedral to formally close the birth centenary celebrations of St. Josemaría Escriva. The exhibit on his life and works can still be viewed at the St. Peter's Chapel while documentary films on his life and on Opus Dei can be seen at the St. Jude Chapel in the Cathedral.

Thai paper builds 101 schools

By Aida Sevilla Mendoza

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Former scholars of the Thai Rath newspaper have become successful doctors, engineers and military officers

DURING my recent study tour of three Asean capitals (as first prize winner in the Explanatory Category of the Jaime V. Ongpin Awards for Excellence in Journalism, for a three-part article in Pinoy Times), I made an amazing discovery. I found out that the Thai Rath, which has the largest circulation in Thailand, is the only newspaper in the world that has built schools for the poor.

Since 1969, Thai Rath has spent a grand total of 300 million baht (about US $7 million plus) to build and maintain 101 public elementary schools in Thailand's 76 provinces.

That Thai Rath should have such an exemplary sense of corporate social responsibility is surprising. The newspaper is often controversial, a broadsheet with a tabloid sensibility (in this case, all Thai broadsheets are tabloids). It has gained popularity for the sensational crime stories it features on the front page and one full inner page devoted to more of the same.

But the editorial formula seems to be successful as the daily's circulation now ranges from 1 to 1.2 million. Thai Rath's printing press is the biggest and most modern in Southeast Asia, with machinery from Germany, France and Sweden, capable of printing 360,000 copies an hour, with 48 pages per copy, half of them in color.

Vacharaphol's brainchild

The press was acquired at a cost of US $100 million in 1996, the year that Kamphol Vacharaphol, the newspaper's founder and director, died.

Thai Rath, which began publishing in 1953, is still owned and managed by the family company, Vacharaphol Co. Ltd., which is not listed in the stock market. Its name means "Thai state" (*ratha* means "state" in Sanskrit).

The school-building program was Vacharaphol's brainchild. Noticing the dire shortage of school buildings, textbooks, libraries and other school facilities and materials in the provinces, Vacharaphol thought of giving poor rural children the same educational opportunities that kids in the cities had. It would be Thai Rath's way of repaying the people for the support they had given to the newspaper. He was concerned that Thailand, in focusing so much on economic development, was neglecting education, especially the building of schools for children in poor rural communities.

In 1969, Vacharaphol coordinated with the local government of Lop Buri province in holding a football game involving movie stars to raise funds for a new school building. With the proceeds and a counterpart contribution from Vacharaphol Co. Ltd., the first Thai Rath school was built. Vacharaphol originally planned to build 76 public elementary schools in Thailand's 76 provinces at a rate of one to eight schools a year, depending on the newspaper's income. But typhoons and floods destroyed school buildings in some provinces, so Thai Rath had to build more, including one in Bangkok, the capital city.

Thai Rath Foundation

On Dec. 27, 1979, his 60th birthday, Vacharaphol established the Thai Rath Newspaper Foundation with an initial donation of one million baht. The foundation institutionalized the Thai Rath Witthaya Schools for Rural Communities project to pursue the goal of providing high-standard education and learning activities to poor but deserving youngsters in the provinces.

The foundation chose the most underprivileged rural communities as beneficiaries of its school-building program. After a school building was completed, it was transferred to the government. But Thai Rath's support did not end with the completion of school buildings. The foundation also provided and continues to provide books for the libraries, as well as school supplies, sports equipment, uniforms and free lunch for the pupils; scholarships for the poorest youngsters and bicycles for those who live far from the schools. It also takes care of the repair and maintenance of the school buildings.

While the government pays the teachers' salaries, the Thai Rath Foundation provides incentives like study tours to Singapore, Sydney, Beijing and Manila for deserving teachers. The 1997 Asian financial crisis forced Thai Rath to limit the teachers' study tours to neighboring Malaysia, Cambodia and Laos, but trips to other countries might resume soon now that the newspaper, as well as the Thai economy, has fully recovered from the financial crisis.

Every year, 40 teachers are chosen for the study tours based on their performance ratings. The foundation also regularly sponsors workshops and seminars nationwide to develop the potential and the professional skills of teachers (especially math teachers) and school administrators. This is all part of the foundation's new focus on improving the quality of teaching in the rural areas after completing 101 school buildings.

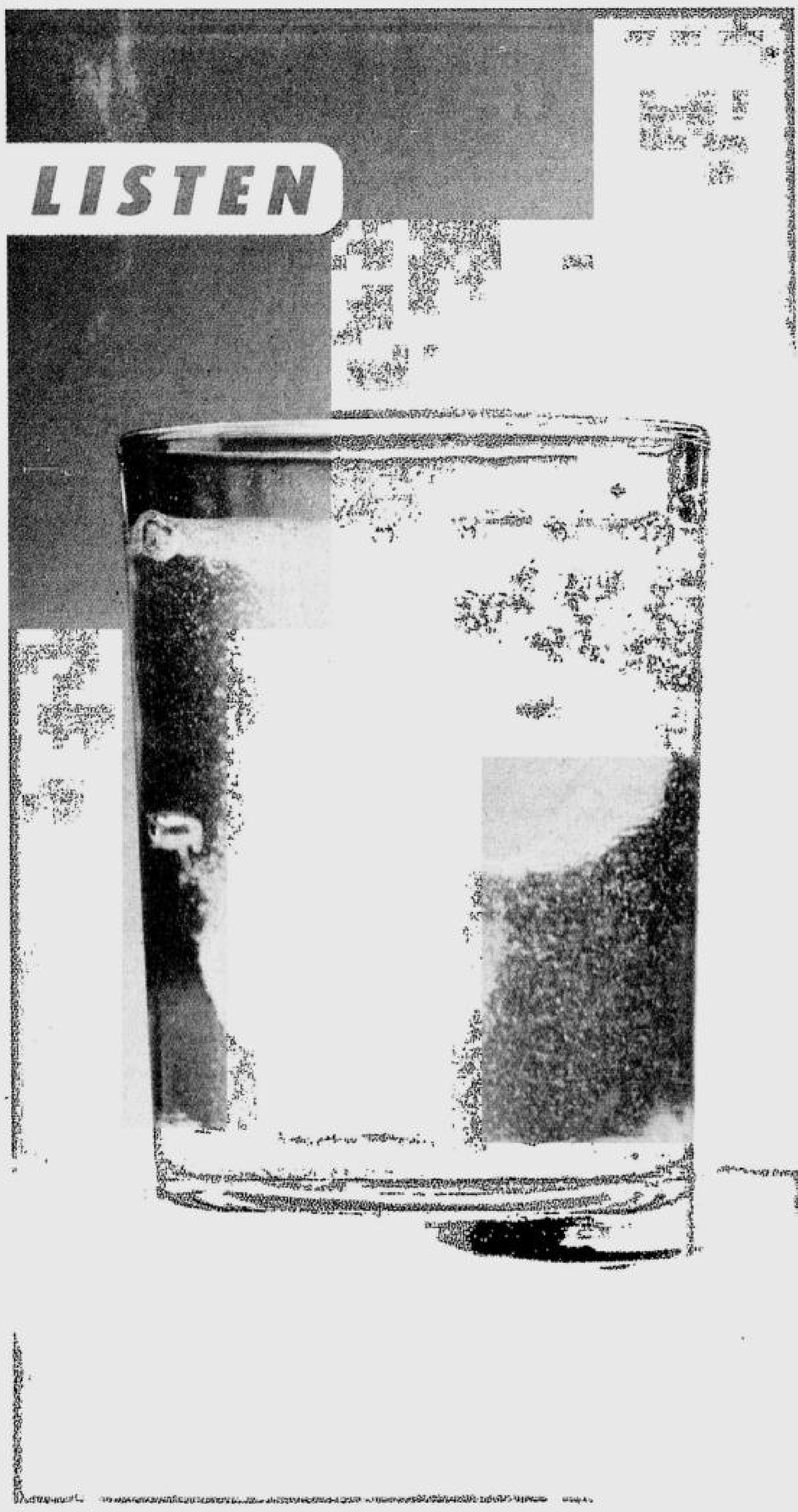
Award from the princess

The curriculum in Thai Rath Witthaya schools includes an agricultural project whereby pupils learn how to raise chickens and grow chemical-free vegetables, which they can use for their free lunch. Many of the schools received recently an award from Princess Chakri Sirindhorn, who also donated organic farm produce as well as fish feed to start fish production activities.

Aside from the regular elementary public school curriculum and basic farming, the students also take courses in ethics, Thai culture and forestry. In 1996, all the Thai Rath Witthaya schools organized a special forestry project to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of King Bhumibol's accession to the throne.

A senior editor of the newspaper told me that some graduates of Thai Rath-sponsored schools had become doctors engineers and military officers. Undoubtedly, the success stories of former beneficiaries of Thai Rath's school-building project are a great source of satisfaction. They also encourage the foundation to continue the program, if not expand it.

Thai Rath's active involvement in raising educational standards in the countryside preceded—but now dovetails with some provisions in—the government's new Education Reform Law. In fact, the Thai Rath school program, by upgrading the infrastructure, curricula, and the skills of teachers and administrators of schools in rural areas, should help speed up the implementation of Thailand's Education Reform Law.



RING TONES
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Bakit Papa *Sex Bomb* **TONE BAKITPAPA** • Enveloped Ideas *The Dawn* **TONE ENVELOPED**
Salamat *The Dawn* **TONE SALAMAT** • I Will Be Here *Gary Valenciano* **TONE IWILLBE** • Wasting *Default* **TONE WASTING**
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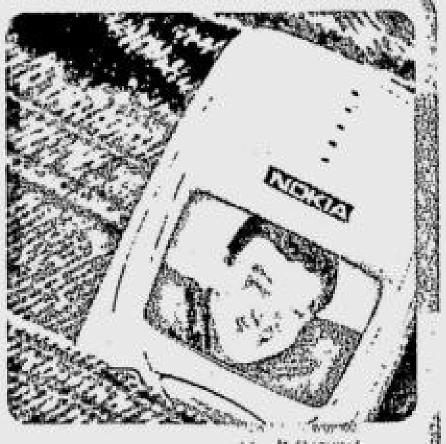

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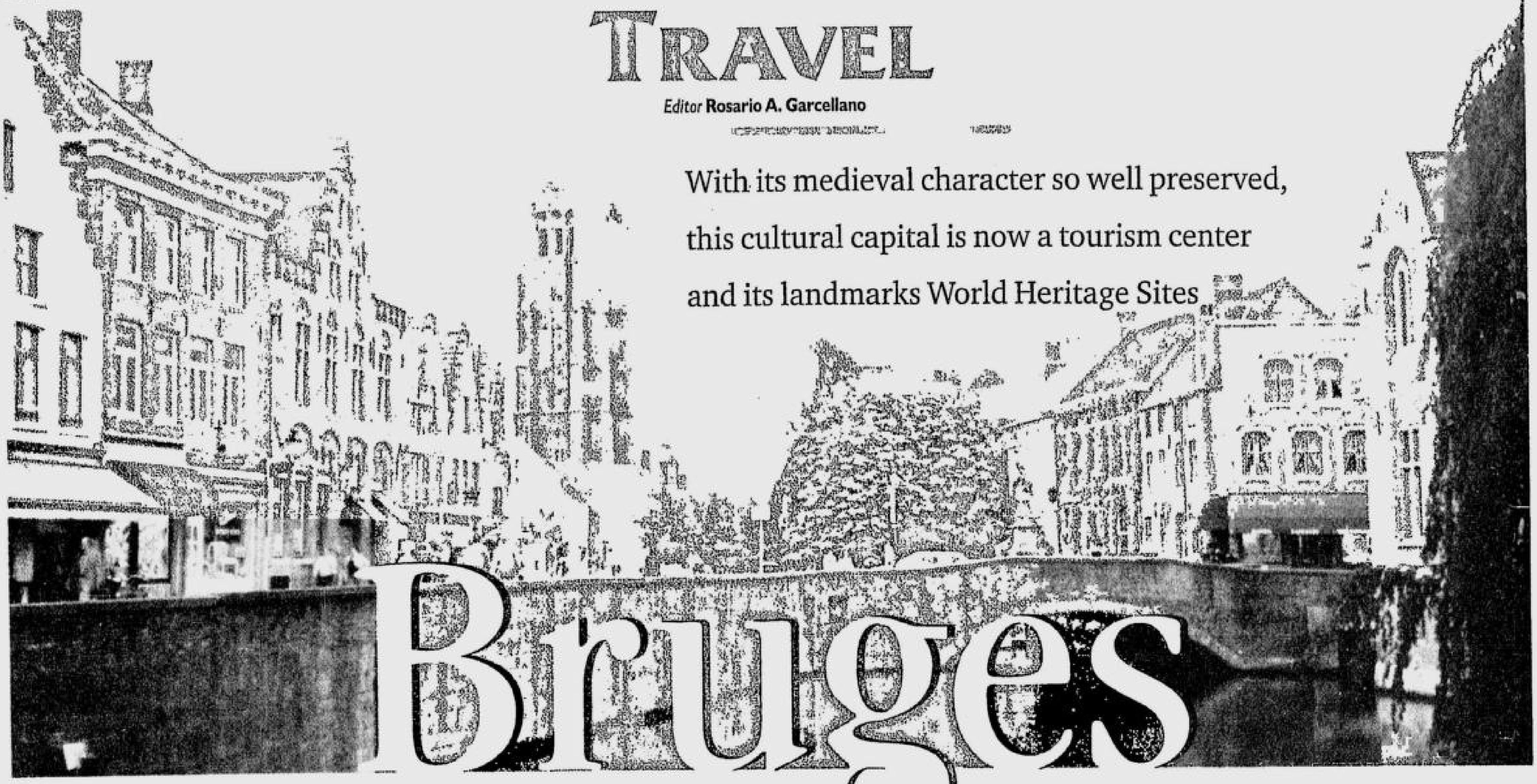
TRAVEL

Editor Rosario A. Garcellano

The gem called Bruges

With its medieval character so well preserved, this cultural capital is now a tourism center and its landmarks World Heritage Sites



Text and photos by Rafael R. Castillo

SOMETIMES it pays to ask. "What's a nice place to visit here in Belgium?" we asked the affable lady at the Tourist Information Bureau in Brussels.

"Bruges, as in Broosh!" she instantly replied, and told us how to get there.

Her enthusiasm convinced us to go, and we walked to the Central Station where we took a train with Bruges as its final destination. And we never regretted our trip to this small town known as the cultural capital of Europe.

Bruges has a colorful history that dates all the way back to the second century. But it was only in the ninth century that Vikings formally founded and named it, after the old Norse word "bryggja," which means "landing stage."

It lies in the north of the Flanders or Vlaanderen west of Belgium. Its location once allowed it direct access to the sea, which is why it was known as an international trading center from the 11th century onward. The production of fine cloth and the abundant warehouses used by traders brought great wealth.

This prosperity resulted in the burgeoning of the arts and architecture in Bruges. The construction of numerous Gothic buildings and churches began, and the town became a haven of the group of artists called the Flemish Primitives, who made an impact on the medieval art scene. Indeed, it became an art center in the Middle Ages, with such famous artists as Jan van Eyck and Hans Memling.

But the good life suddenly came to an end in the 16th century.

Bruges lost its outlet to the sea because of the silting of the coastal area. The Spaniards came to conquer—a turn of events that marked the decline of its wealth and glory.

Still, the town has preserved its medieval character to become the art and tourism center of Europe. It is so well preserved that many of its landmark structures and attractions have been declared World Heritage Sites by Unesco.

Bruges can be easily explored on foot in less than a day. Thus, we ambled through the cobbled streets guided by a walking-tour guide that we bought at the train station for one euro (equivalent to US$1.)

The activity can get to be so leisurely that you forget you're walking on a street where cars and other vehicles occasionally pass. But the drivers are probably used to such tourist-induced traffic hazards because they patiently wait without blowing their horns until you've cleared the street. You gesture in apology and they smile warmly as though saying: "No problem, thank you for coming."

COBBLESTONE streets and horse-drawn carriages evoke a bygone era.

Yet the sights can be so awesome that they serve as distractions, making you miss some recommended things to see. The paid tourist guides can be most helpful, but if you want to save a few euros by doing the walking tour by yourself, following the route recommended by a tour pamphlet can be a way to fully enjoy Bruges.

Blasts from the past

And what an experience it is: The horse-pulled carriages whose drivers are dressed in period costumes conjure up scenes of medieval Europe when women wore elaborate clothes highlighting girdled waists and men wore handmade coats and top hats.

The imaginary sojourn in the Middle Ages, however, can get out of sync with the Volvos and other European cars parked on the streets, and the occasional youth with hair dyed avocado green or flaming red. But these 21st-century aberrations do not diminish the town's old charms one bit.

One of the tourist attractions in Bruges is the Town Hall, which continues to play an important part in modern-day life. Built between 1376 and 1420, it has a gothic chamber that visitors can view after climbing the ceremonial staircase leading from the entrance hall to the first floor.

The wooden, polychrome ceiling is decorated with a profusion of late-medieval carvings. In the 19th century, the murals illustrating Bruges' past were added during the chamber's restoration. The adjoining "historical chamber" holds certain objects, documents and works of art highlighting that glorious past.

A stone's throw away from the Town Hall is the Basilica of the Holy Blood, which actually houses two chapels. At ground level is the Roman-styled St. Basil's Chapel, which was built in the 1100s. The first-floor chapel, on the other hand, was converted into gothic style in the 15th century and contains the famous Relic of the Holy Blood, which is worshipped every Friday.

In the Museum of the Holy Blood, also located in the basilica, an exhibition of reliquaries, vestments, paintings and other artifacts is on view.

IMAGINE the view from within the houses.

There are more than a dozen museums in Bruges that provide visitors rich glimpses of the centuries past.

One such is the Gruuthuse Museum, which is housed in the 15th-century palace of the Lords of Gruuthuse and contains the most varied of applied or decorative art in Bruges. For example, a large collection of sculpture, fine tapestries and furniture is accompanied by silverware, copper, tin, coins and medals, pottery and musical instruments. In the armory room is an 18th-century guillotine.

There is also the Groeninge Museum, which contains a comprehensive survey of six centuries of Flemish, Dutch and Belgian painting, from Van Eyck to Marcel Broodthaers. Its many highlights include a collection of Flemish Primitives art, works by a wide range of Renaissance and Baroque masters, a selection of paintings from the 18th- and 19th-century neo-classical and realist periods, milestones of Belgian symbolism and modernism, masterpieces of Flemish expressionism, and many more.

Farther down south of the town center is another museum where history and art are preserved. The 13th-century church of the Old St. John's Hospital and the adjoining Cornelius Chapel display six masterpieces by the painter Memling (which is why it is also known as the Memling Museum). Paintings, furniture and other items related to the hospital's rich history is exhibited in the former wards. The 17th-century Old Dispensary is also worth a visit.

The beautifully restored 19th-century hospital buildings are used today by the Oud Sint-Jan Foundation for exhibitions and conventions.

But there are other, distinctive, museums such as:

- The Brewery Museum, which is housed in an old malt house and where several brewing machines are still in place.

It highlights the histories of the 31 breweries that were still in operation at the turn of the century, producing such delicious beers as Tarwebier, Tripel and Abdij Steenbrugge.

- The Diamond Museum, which illustrates the town's extraordinary past as Europe's oldest diamond center and where visitors can discover the multifaceted world of the exceedingly precious stone.

Bruges is also well known for excellent lace, and lace-making demonstrations are conducted daily for tourists at several centers.

Venice of the North

Striking also is the intricate network of canals for which Bruges has been called the "Venice of the North." Dwelling houses with wide and finely draped bay windows line the canals, leading one to imagine that the view from inside must be lyrically romantic.

The canal network provides visitors one of the more serene ways of touring the town. One may pass along the Dijver canal across a stone bridge to Mariastratt and the 13th-century Church of Our Lady that houses Michelangelo's white-marble Madonna and Child, the only finished statue of the artist in Northern Europe.

Another way to view the town is to climb the 366 steps to the top of the Belfry tower. Although the climb is quite a challenge, one will be rewarded with a spectacular view of a medieval fairyland.

Built in the 13th-15th centuries, this tower measures about 88 meters in height and is a World Heritage Site. It is an exceptional example of a form of urban architecture adapted to the spiritual and political requirements of the Middle Ages.

It houses the former treasury, in which Bruges' valuables, money and royal charters were once kept. A museum now highlights the second story.

Also located in the tower is the Belfry's carillon, composed of 47 bells with a total weight of 27 tons. Concerts are played there three times a week.

With its designation by the 15-nation European Union as one of two European cultural capitals for 2002 (the other is Salamanca, Spain), Bruges hosted 160 concerts, art exhibits and other cultural events last year.

Eating and drinking also played a big part in Bruges' history—a reason why its people are connoisseurs of good living.

One may say, too, that they have a sweet tooth, specifically for fine chocolates. And visitors similarly inclined will be tempted by chocolate-filled display windows all over town.

Godiva is the biggest local brand. But for the best small family operation, be sure to drop in on "Maitre Chocolatier Verbeke," where Mr. Verbeke busily makes chocolates downstairs while Ms Verbeke minds the shop. Ask her to fill a 100-gram bag (the smallest bag they sell, for about $3) of your favorites. Most are "pralines." While the "hedgehogs" are popular, be sure to get a "pharaoh's head." Pray for cool weather, though, because the Verbekes close the shop when it gets very warm.

For a meal in an old Flemish atmosphere, don't miss the Restaurant Ganzespel.

Some restaurants welcome visitors with a cozy fire and giant pancakes laced with apples, bananas and four kinds of cheese. Other popular dishes include steamed mussels and *frites*—Belgian "French fries" dipped in rich mayonnaise.(I had to check my blood cholesterol after our trip to Bruges!)

The drink to wash it all down? Belgian beer, of course, your choice of over 300 varieties available.

These are just some of the thousand and one reasons why Bruges should be on top of your traveling list when you're in Belgium.

And even if you're nowhere near the area, Bruges can always be "a good cultural destination worth traveling several thousand miles for." Take it from the lady we asked at the Tourist Information counter in Brussels.

Dr. Rafael Castillo writes Medical Files, a weekly column in the Health & Science Section of the Inquirer.

Not only for shop-till-you-drop types

THE DUBAI Shopping Festival (DSF), touted as the world's showpiece entertainment and shopping extravaganza, will be held in the commercial capital of the United Arab Emirates on Jan. 15-Feb. 15.

Festivities will focus on a celebration of human emotions and family values through the theme of "One World, One Family, One Festival," organizers said. Thus, they said, visitors were expected to rediscover their sense of wonder, happiness, excitement and peace in a holiday packed with shopping opportunities, live entertainment, sports events, promotions, prizes, encounters with world cultures, and much more.

"The Dubai Shopping Festival 2003 will provide a rich lineup of refreshingly original events and activities," said chief executive officer Saeed Mohammed Al Nabouda. "We would like to invite the world to be part of the festive atmosphere for an emotional experience that will make DSF 2003 the biggest gathering of delighted families.

"During the DSF, whether you land in Dubai night or day, you will be [met] with shopping and entertainment opportunities."

The DSF was launched in 1996 by the government of Dubai in collaboration with the private sector. It drew more than 2.68 million visitors last year.

Like its predecessors, DSF 2003 will begin with a ceremonial grand opening and an overnight transformation with the city in lights.

Shopping will be a round-the-clock event at more than 3,000 retail outlets and an exciting new concept, the Night Bazaar, where bargains will be offered nightly on haute couture, perfumes, electronics, cosmetics, textiles, home décor and traditional handicrafts.

The DSF will also offer daily raffles for luxury cars, cash, gold and other big prizes valued at more than US$200,000, and a whopping $500,000 at every weekend of the festival.

Other attractions are entertainment for children and adults; the Dubai International Jazz Festival on Jan. 29-31; the Global Village, with more than 50 countries participating; art exhibits, heritage activities, folkloric performances and exhibitions; and sports like jet skiing, sailing, cruising, fishing, diving, wind surfing, and, of course, golf.

For local adventure, visitors may also try dune bashing, bowling, archery, desert camping, sand skiing and the desert safari.

Emirates Airline, the official carrier and a key sponsor of the DSF, flies in visitors from 58 destinations worldwide. It will offer discounted fares and extra baggage allowance during the festival, and so will its affiliated travel agencies and Dubai's hotels.

Immigration procedures to the UAE are eased especially for this period.

For inquiries, call the local Emirates offices or log on to www.mydsf.com.

DAVID Rockefeller, Fernando and Jaime Zobel

PHOTOS BY BETOY JOHNSON

CORA Alvina, CCP president Nestor Jardin and Doris Ho

FORMER Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, US Ambassador and Mme. Francis Ricciardone

Asian Council holds star-studded gala dinner

DIPLOMATIC SWIRL

By Amiga

JOSIE Natori

MARIBEL Ongpin

MAKE no mistake—it was a star-studded affair with everybody who is anybody in the field of diplomacy, business, politics and the arts in attendance (the undersigned an exception). We're referring to the gala dinner in honor of the board of trustees of the Asian Cultural Council of New York at the main lobby of the Cultural Center.

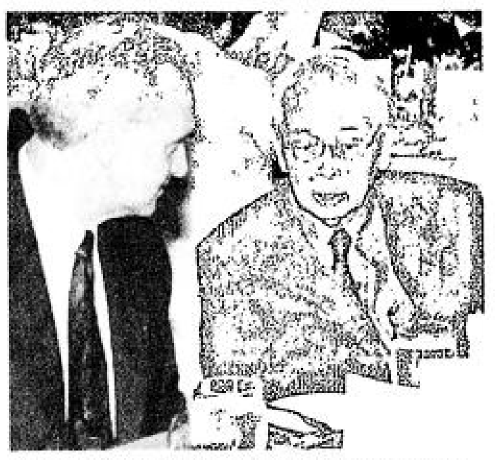
Of course, there was **Ernest Escaler**, chair of the Asian Cultural Council Philippines. No one who knew him could understand how he got himself into that pile of carabao manure. Ernest, after all, belongs to that stratum that believes a person's name should only appear thrice in the papers. But there he was, as big as life on the front pages.

Dinner was kind of native, but I preferred my *adobo* with garlic fried rice rather than puff pastry. But the program, with the Madrigal Singers, the scholars of the Pundaquit String Ensemble, and the dance performance by Ballet Philippines accompanied by the Pinikpikan Band was grand; **Boy Yuchengco** should be proud of his group. And just in case you wanted to know who were there, aside from the ambassadors of the United States, Canada, and Germany: Speaker **Jose de Venecia**, and former Justice Secretary **Hernando Perez**, there was **Edouard** and **Sevrin de Mialhe**, **Rep. Miguel Zubiri**, **Doris Ho**, **Maribel Ongpin**, **Lor Calma**, **Ambassador Isabel Wilson**, **Fernando Zobel de Ayala**, not to mention his dad, **Jaime**.

AMBASSADOR Isabel Wilson, David Rockefeller, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Ernest Escaler

SEVRIN de Mialhe

President **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** arrived after dessert and then disappeared to have a tete-a-tete with **David Rockefeller**, a trustee of the New York Council and whose ancestors started the whole thing. By the way, his message to the guests, the President included, was that a society that ignored culture was looking for trouble. Well, he didn't quite put it that way, but you know what I mean, given the low priority given to the arts here. Still, it all turned out to be a lovely evening. We should do it more often.



AMBASSADOR RIcciardone and National Artist Maceda

GERMAN Ambassador Herbert Jess and British Ambassador Paul Dimond

He dreams of visiting the US

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Tita Dulce

DEAR Tita Dulce,

I've always dreamed of spending at least a week in the United States. Mmy grandfather worked for 1113th Engineering Corps during the liberation. My grandmother told us that he would come home from work on weekends bringing cheese and chocolates, and he was paid in dollars.

I have a high-paying job, and there are two young ladies I am attracted to, but I have not made any serious move because I want to enjoy bachelorhood before becoming a family man. Is it wrong to want to travel abroad instead of settling down and saving for the future?

With income from our properties and my salary, I can afford to go there, just to breathe American air and give myself a break before settling down. Do you think I can be given a visa, and how do I apply for it?

FRANKIE

Wishing to travel abroad is not wrong if you can afford the expenses. To convince the US embassy consul that you deserve a tourist visa, you have to prove that you have family, financial and social ties here in our country. That means you should have a family, funds, friends and employment here that would make you come back.

But first you must have a valid passport, and you must fill a visa application form. You may get those forms from most Bank of Philippine Islands or Citibank branches—where you should also pay the $100 visa application fee.

After accomplishing the form, call 1-909-101-0000 to ask for a visa interview appointment. That is a toll number. You'll be charged about P20 per minute, plus long distance rates, if applicable. You have to call that number using phones with direct-dial (in contrast to operator-assisted) capabilities.

Be sure you have your passport and application form with you when you call that number.

When you go to the embassy for your interview, bring documents that prove you have family, financial and social ties here. It is useful to bring a bank statement of at least the last three months.

You need to show titles of your land properties. If you are employed, you need a letter from your office's personnel department certifying your employment, position, salary and tenure. If you own your business, you need SEC or DTI registration and local business permits.

For married applicants, marriage certificates and birth certificates of their children are good proof of their family ties.

During the interview, be calm and dignified. If you appear nervous, the interviewer might suspect that you have intentions other than being a tourist in the US.

Good luck and happy trip.

E-mail titadulce@netscape. net or send letters to P.O. Box 2353, Makati CPO 1263 Makati City, or PDI, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City

Thousands of delegates to attend World Meeting of Families

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Darang

THE COUNTRY is now busy preparing for the fourth World Meeting of Families (WMF) on Jan. 22-26 at the PICC. Thousands of delegates are expected to come to Manila.

With Bishop Soc Villegas as chair of the Central Committee and Ambassador Tita de Villa as executive secretary, the WMF will have five main events: International Theological Pastoral Congress, Sons and Daughters Congress, Eucharistic Celebrations for Families on Pilgrimage, Festive Meeting with Testimonies from Families, and the closing Mass with the Papal Legate presiding and some 1,000 cardinals, bishops and priests from all over the world concelebrating. The WMF's theme is "The Christian Family: Good News for the Third Millennium."

WMF's origin

The Pope issued the Apostolic Exhortation "Familiaris Consortio" and established the Council for the Family in 1981 to show his concern for the Christian family. He called the First World Meeting of Families in 1994 in Rome. Since then, the WMF has been set every three years for families to pray together, dialogue, learn, share and deepen their understanding of how the Christian family can serve as the domestic church.

Delegates will be invited to attend Masses in different shrines and churches, according to their nationalities: English, Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Mandarin, Japanese, Korean and Filipino (and six Philippine dialects).

Central Secretariat is at the Pius XII Catholic Center, with tel. nos. 404-2472 or 525-9126 local 11.

Focusing on the positive

Despite the bad news that break our hearts and leave us feeling hopeless, there are good news that uplift our spirits. One of these is the building or restoration of shrines, churches and institutions.

Going on right now is the restoration of St. Anthony Shrine in Bustillos, Sampaloc. Fr. Willie Benito, Rector, wrote to update us on the ongoing restoration of the National Shrine of St. Anthony de Padua. He said, "After the many physical improvements done in the St. Anthony Shrine in the past months through the aid of kind-hearted and generous devotees, and through your most helpful news articles about us, I would like to take this chance to knock on the hearts of the rest of our brothers and sisters who have yet to experience the fulfillment of giving for the benefit of the church of the poor. Now, we are dreaming of rebuilding our St. Anthony Charity Clinic.

"Our social service program caters to the poor through the free medical and dental treatment and feeding services every Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. The St. Anthony Charity Clinic has been in existence for more than 30 years now. It is the seat of outreach service, being attended by volunteer medical and dental professionals and workers. There are over 300 indigents who benefit from the medical, dental and feeding program each week.

"However, the enormous workload, limited space and almost dilapidated structure of the clinic could not allow a smooth, simultaneous flow of services.

"The former administration of friars had planned to construct a new building in the same site to cater to increasing demands. The said building which they dreamed of putting up was estimated at P1.5 million (2001 estimate) which, unfortunately, did not materialize due to lack of funds.

"The proposed structural plan of the clinic provides compartmentalized spaces for medical consultation, treatment, minor surgery, dental treatment, pharmacy, feeding and community outreach program. Upon its realization, the new community of Franciscan friars visualizes a more efficient, highly functional social service program, administered in a clean, orderly, spacious venue conducive to feeding and medical treatment of indigents."

Those who wish to help can write Fr. Willie Benito, OFM, at St. Anthony's Shrine at 254 Manrique St., Sampaloc, Manila 1008 or call him at 734-6527.

Medjugorje pilgrimage

Alice Padlan will once more bring pilgrims to Medjugorje on April 21, Easter Monday. Inspired by her deep devotion to Our Lady of Medjugorje, Alice is already preparing the trip considering that it takes longer now to get a Schengen visa and one to Bosnia.

ST. ANTHONY Shrine in Bustillos, Sampaloc

The trip will include Paris, Vienna, Lourdes and Rome. Those who are interested can call Alice Padlan at 525-3883 or 525-3902.

Festin family reunion

The Festin family reunion on Dec. 30 every year always happens, whether there is a war or calamity, according to Dulce Festin-Baybay, daughter of the late Malvar Festin and Remedios Reyes. This year is the 50th year that the descendants of the late Rep. Leonardo Festin and his first wife Mariana Famatico Festin gathered for the reunion. This time, it took place at the Robinson's Tower I in Ermita, with the Augusto Festin family as host.

The more well known Festins include writer Manuel Festin Martinez, Dr. Mario Festin, writer and ABS-CBN Foundation PR director Dulce Festin-Baybay, Fr. Laurence Festin and Fr. Jojo Festin, sons of Augusto Festin.

Angel tree

The Kiddie Club at Canyon Woods Residential Resort chose names of poor kids in a *barangay* in Laurel, Batangas and prepared gifts for them last Christmas.

A gift-giving ceremony for the children of poor families highlighted the party. The names of the kids were attached to the Christmas tree which they called an angel tree.

Sto. Niño procession

The Sto. Niño de Providencia will celebrate his feast day on Jan. 27 with a gathering at 65 Pijuan St., BF Resort Village, Las Piñas, 7 a.m.-6 p.m.

A motorcade will bring the image to the Mary, Mother of the Church Parish, where a Holy Mass will take place at 3 p.m. A procession will bring back the Sto. Niño to the Prayer Room.

'Inang Mahal, Umasa Ka' concert

Our Lady of the Pillar Parish Church in Imus, Cavite, was the venue for the recent concert "Inang Mahal, Umasa Ka." It featured the Manila Symphony Orchestra II, a special number by Marvin Ong and Joy Isabel, the Mandaluyong Children's Chorus and the Imus Cathedral Grand Choir. A fund-raising project for the benefit of Our Lady of the Pillar Parish, the concert was held in cooperation with Columbia International Food Products and the Imus Municipal Tourism Council.

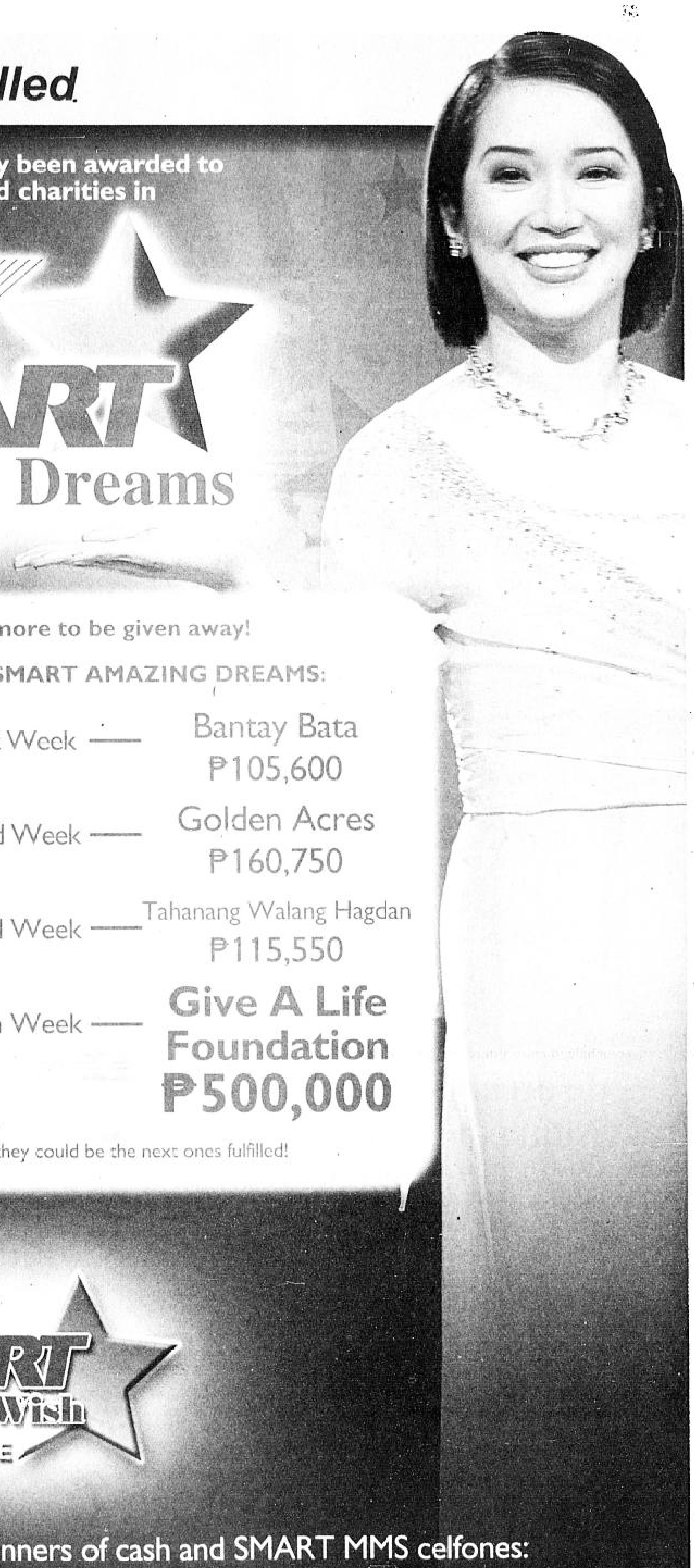
Our Lady of Prompt Succor feast

The feast of Our Lady of Prompt Succor in Buhi, Camarines Sur is on Jan. 8. Her image is in the St. Francis of Assisi Church. Parish priest is Fr. Noe Badiola.

Simply dreams fulfilled

Close to ₱3,000,000 have already been awarded to game winners and selected charities in

SMART Amazing Dreams



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Joey Pasion ₱321,500	2nd Week	Golden Acres ₱160,750
Charlito Napa ₱231,100	3rd Week	Tahanang Walang Hagdan ₱115,550
Ramon Dueña, Jr. **₱1,000,000**	4th Week	**Give A Life Foundation** **₱500,000**

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SMART Amazing Wish TRIVIA GAME

and you could be among these winners of cash and SMART MMS celfones:

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Chris Ernie O. Villareal
Kathleen Joy Roxas
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Enter Number
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Sunday LIFESTYLE

Weddings & Engagements

LEGAL UNION: Art Boniol and Aleli Militsala take a break from their demanding jobs as lawyers to pose for this engagement pictorial with lensman Mel Cortes.

How to put the W@W into your wedding

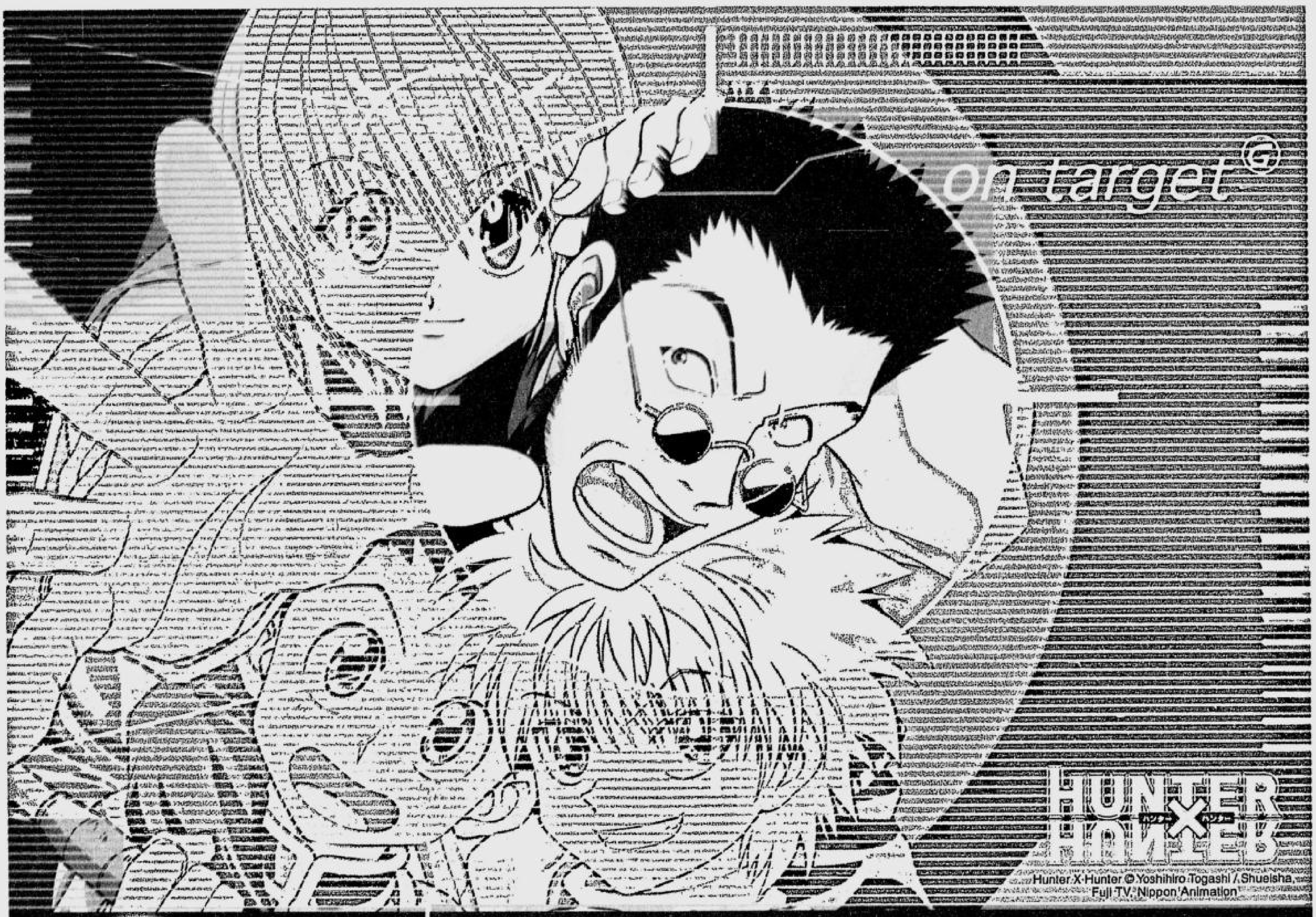
Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Chito Vecina

YOU found the right guy, and you are wearing a lovely ring around your finger. You've picked a date for the wedding.

But now you have to think about the church, the reception, the flowers, the keepsakes, the food, the bridal car, the photographer, the makeup artist, your dream gown… and how you are going to have the perfect, romantic wedding you've been dreaming about since you were seven, without exceeding your budget.

Of course, there's also the question of how you can find time in your hectic schedule to plan your big day, especially if you are determined to go higher in the corporate ladder. And, as others before you have realized, you learn that having your dream wedding involves more than just finding the perfect

HOW/ D3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Crayon Shin Chan	Opening Theme Intro	crayonintro
	Opening Theme Chorus	crayonchorus
	Closing Theme	crayonclose
Cyborg Cat Kurochan	Main Theme	cyborgopen
Hunter X Hunter	Taiyou Ha	hxhtaiyouha
	Densetsu	hxhdensetsu
	Tabidachi	hxhtabidachi
Flame of Recca	Nanka Shiawase	reccashiawase
Voltes V	Opening Theme Main	v5main
	Closing Theme Main	v5close1
Daimos	Closing Theme	daimosclose
Bubblegum Crisis	Closing Theme	bgumclose
Oh My Goddess	Closing Theme	omgclose
Monster Rancher	Closing Theme	mrclose
Magic Knight Rayearth	Closing Theme	mkrclose
Lupin3	Closing Theme	l3close
Trigun	Closing Theme	trigunclose

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To download, send the following to 2346:
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For text cards, type in **TC (keyword)**. Ex: TC axngon

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Papa's girl is now a lady

ERIKA dances with her dad, INQUIRER chief photographer Ernie Sarmiento.

DADDY'S baby has, indeed, become a lady.

Eighteen-year-old Erika Joyce A. Sarmiento was a stunning vision as she walked into the roofdeck/poolside of the City Garden Hotel in Makati. The venue was adorned with green and pink balloons, amid the city lights floating like fireflies from beyond. The debutante, escorted by her brothers Kokoy and Jong, was resplendent in her white tube gown with pink and green beads by Benet Cabales of Fashion Forward. Dad, INQUIRER chief photographer Ernie Sarmiento, and mom Eya, beamed proudly. It was the start of a magical evening and a new life ahead for their lovely Ikay (as Erika is fondly called).

An economics major at the University of Sto. Tomas, Erika conceptualized and directed her own coming-out party. She was assisted by cousin Eona, who made sure each guest wrote his/her birthday message beside the debutante's portrait; INQUIRER photo section's Grace Santos, who manned the registry desk, and high school friends at St. Scholastica's-Marikina, Isabel Platon and Karen Sta. Maria, who were the evening's emcees.

Friend Katrina Kaye Bulaong and Erika's kid sister Isay led the prayers.

When it was time for the debutante's first dance with her dad, INQUIRER photographer Edwin Bacasmas performed a touching rendition of "I Will Be Here." Isay then handed her dad a rose, signaling the start of the dance of the 18 roses. Erika then danced away with the men, composed of uncles, cousins, friends and her two brothers. Mom Eya then presented her the first of the 18 candles, followed by aunts, cousins, sister Isay and best friend Armi Avillano.

Dad Ernie and Mom Eya expressed their gratitude to all the guests. Erika was most grateful to her Lolo Joe and Lola Minda Sarmiento, and her Lolo Awe and Lola Ganda Aquino, who were not able to come because the latter was in the hospital.

Some serious partying followed when Erika's brother, Kokoy, and his friends at the Ateneo high school played the debutante's favorite alternative songs. The band, Caboodle, is composed of Kokoy on guitars/vocals, Lean Oviedo on drums/guitars, Mel Lumagui on guitars/drums, Jec Ramos on bass and Louie Regala, vocals.

ISAY, the debutante's sister, leads the opening prayer while emcees Isabel Platon and Karen Sta. Maria look on.

THE DEBUTANTE is escorted into the ballroom by her brothers, Jong and Kokoy.

ERIKA'S *lola* Annie Atencia, and *lola* Minda and *lolo* Joe Sarmiento

MUSIC is provided by the Caboodle band, made up by Kokoy Sarmiento (far left) and his friends from the Ateneo high school.

ERIKA poses with her relatives.

WITH HER friends from UST

PHOTOS BY EDWIN BACASMAS AND MIKE ALQUINTO

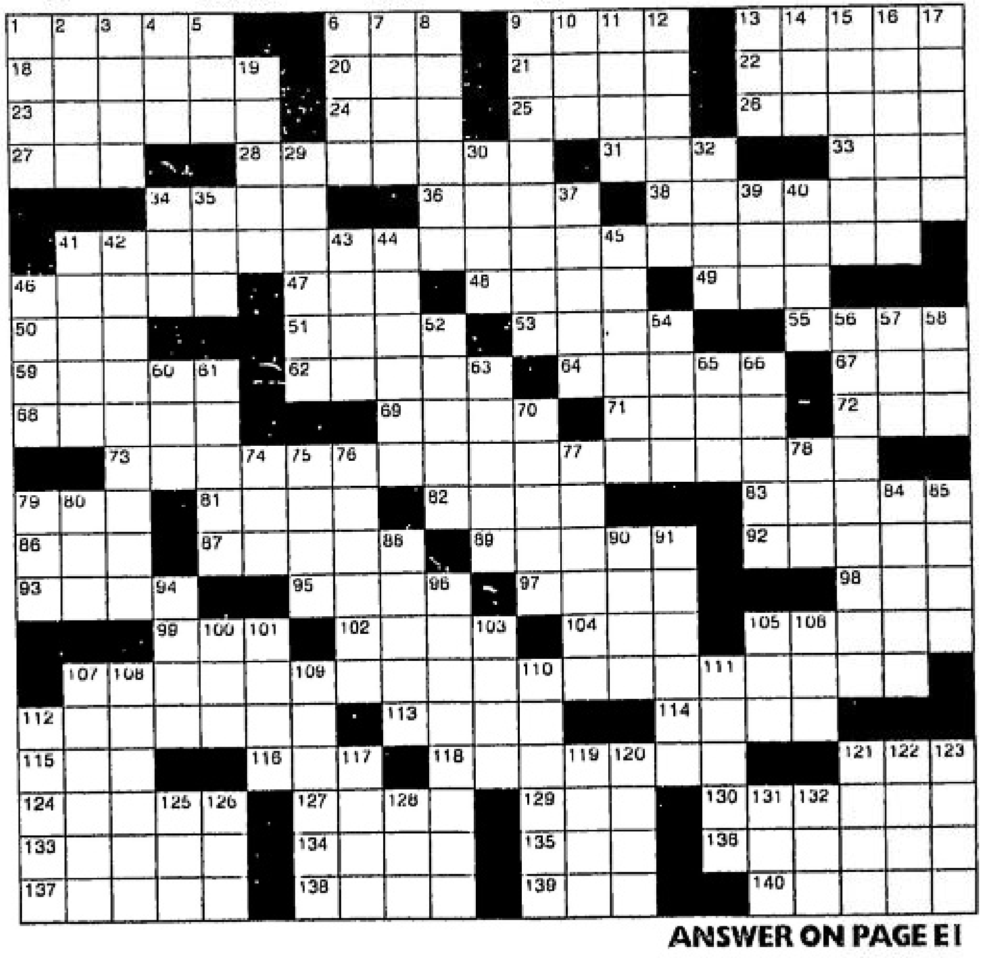
SUNDAY CROSSWORD

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Donna J. Stone

ILL HUMOR

ACROSS
1 Monty Python's Michael
6 Deli choice
9 Gear teeth
13 Film pterodactyl
18 Porthos' pal
20 Team scream
21 Well-ventilated
22 Felony
23 Start of a remark
24 Funnyman Philips
25 Deep purple
26 Confused
27 Faux —
28 Vince of "Ben Casey"
31 Small shots
33 PC key
34 "Rosanna" rockers
36 Couple
38 Part of HOMES
41 Part 2 of remark
46 Minnesota city
47 Alias initials
48 Heavy metal instrument?
49 Child welfare org.
50 Mil. unit
51 Say it isn't so
53 Labyrinth
55 Relax
59 Gentle as —
62 Abhorrence
64 A Barbary State
67 "Norma —" ('79 film)
68 Buccaneers' headquarters
69 Actress Ione
71 Football's Swann
72 Woodsman's tool
73 Part 3 of remark
79 — Mahal
81 Alley Oop's love
82 Out-of-this-world org.
83 Invasions
86 President Bush was one
87 Overturn
89 Macho type
92 Roast host
93 Circus sight
95 Teri of "Tootsie"
97 — majesty
98 Canterbury quaff
99 Hoagy
102 Wordsworth work
104 ABA member
105 Teach on the side
107 Part 4 of remark
112 Deprive (of)
113 Wooden strip
114 Olympic event
115 Flight
116 Tasty tuber
118 Proposition
121 Carol opener
124 Inevitable activity
127 Hungarian sheepdog
129 Shaq's pack
130 End of remark
133 Daybreak
134 Toast topper
135 Perlman or Pallilo
136 Bostonian, for one
137 "The Brandon — Story" ('98 film)
138 So. state
139 Still
140 Self-confidence

DOWN
1 Theatrical Joseph
2 District
3 Neighbor of Thailand
4 Mischief-maker
5 Zilch
6 Make coffee
7 "Rama — Ding Dong" ('61 tune)
8 Legendary athlete Jim
9 Pepper
10 Vinegar's partner
11 Chow
12 Token
13 JVC competitor
14 Terrier's tidbit
15 Win over
16 Audrey Tautou role
17 Peachy-keen
19 Take care of
29 El —, AR
30 Tapered seam
32 Cut a cuticle
34 Decimal base
35 Two — kind
37 Morocco's capital
39 Cable channel
40 Thickening agent
41 Writer Rogers St. Johns
42 Thingumbob
43 Got by, with "out"
44 Disappear
45 Lapis —
46 Part of Q.E.D.
52 Canadian territory
54 "Only Time" singer
56 Destroy
57 Getz's instrument
58 Fairway accessory
60 Speedometer abbr.
61 "Blue —" ('77 hit)
63 Blabby bird
65 Business abbr.
66 — drum
70 One of the Fords
74 Weasel word?
75 First name in fashion
76 Finger food
77 Composer Jean-Philippe
78 "Platoon" setting
79 Gumshoe
80 Chicken — king
84 Apollo's isle
85 Soothsayer
88 Witty
90 Vino center
91 Irritate
94 Punta del —
96 Link
100 Actress Thurman
101 Bunch of birds
103 "Pyramus and Thisbe," e.g.
105 Playground game
106 Luau instrument
107 Confederation
108 January stoat
109 Earl Grey's place
110 William Sydney Porter
111 Man of the cloth?
112 Great time
117 Stubborn sort
119 Hautboy
120 Be bombastic
121 "Kon- —"
122 Summertime treats
123 — -Ball
125 "Sister Act" extra
126 Scholastic abbr.
128 Deighton or Dawson
131 "The Bells" monogram
132 — -Cat



ANSWER ON PAGE E1

ROMANTIC TREK. Mountaineer Jhoy Bordallo will exchange vows with Renren Dionisio in a nature-themed wedding in Caleruega.

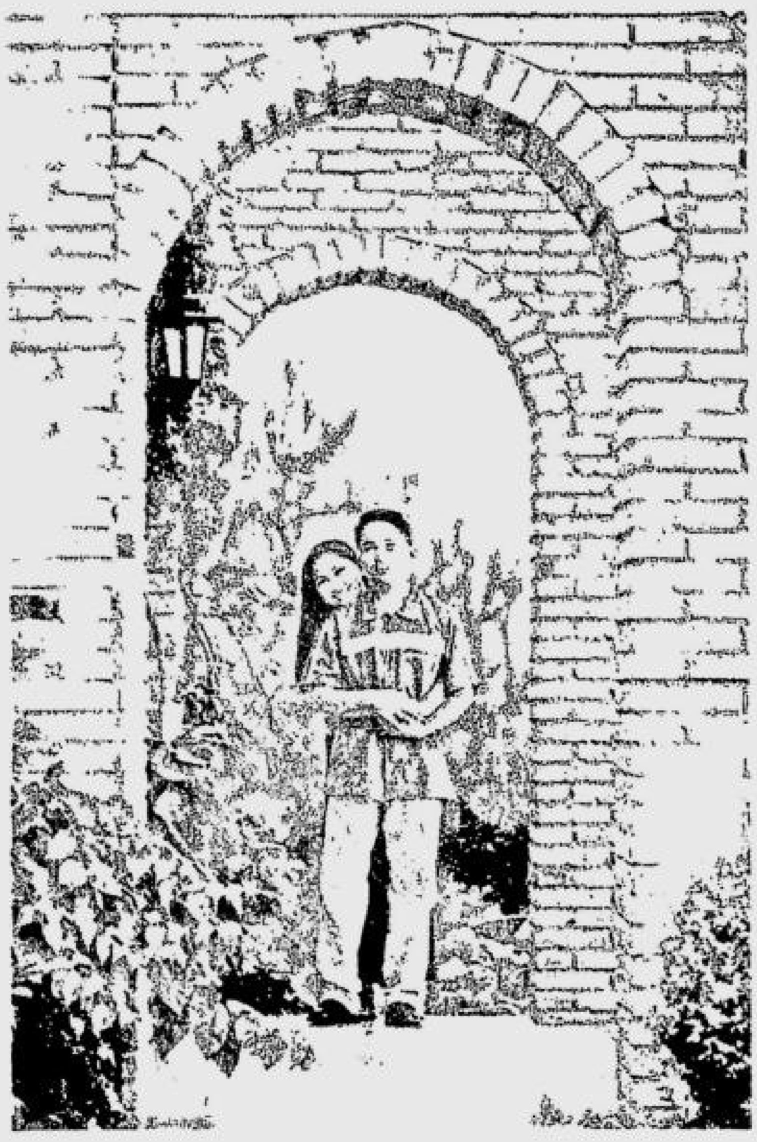
HOMETOWN LOVE AFFAIR. Dario Navarro pops the question to longtime girlfriend and townmate Richele Flores at the W@W Christmas party.

How to put the W@W into your wedding

From page D1

man.

Knowing many would-be brides face this kind of dilemma, young couple John and Bennette Rana set up www.weddingsatwork.com, a free online service that aims to help make wedding preparation easier. A first in the country, the website, known for short as W@W, carries a comprehensive list of wedding suppliers. With 300 members now (five percent are men), the website is a venue for career women—and men—to compare notes and make suggestions on the choice of suppliers.



FROM PUPPY LOVE TO LIFETIME COMMITMENT. Jay Baldonado proposes to high-school sweetheart Dang Fortaleza under the starlit Boracay skies.

W@Wies

The Ranas, who make time to pursue the project they are both passionate about, bring together every year the W@Wies (as the members call themselves) at Christmastime. "In the past, it was simple potluck," says Bennette, "but this year, it was such a thrill because some of the suppliers volunteered to pool their resources together for the event."

This year's get-together, which gathered around 70 couples, was held at the breathtaking Fernwood Gardens in Quezon City, and coordinated by Themes and Motifs.

"It was my fiancée who found out about W@W," says lawyer Art Boniol. His fiancée, Aleli Militsala, is, like him, a busy lawyer. Boniol said she would log on to W@W once she got home after a busy day at work. "I didn't know so much was involved in planning a wedding," Militsala said. "Knowing the other W@Wies was a huge help."

April Tupas, 26, is all praises for W@W. "I'm doing all the planning and decision-making because my fiancé is based in Australia," she said with a sigh. Francis Buenaventura, her fiancé, won't be home until a week before their Jan. 18 wedding. "The W@Wies are helping me with the preparation little by little," Tupas said.

ABS-CBN employee Roda Fortaleza will wed her high school sweetheart, Jay Baldonado, in April. Both are actively involved in the wedding preparation. "Now all we have to worry about is that I lose weight and he gains weight before the wedding," she laughingly said.

Renren Dionisio and Jhoy Bordallo, with the help of W@W, will make their nature-themed dream wedding come true in Caleruega. "He helped me all the way through, from the choice of suppliers down to the legwork," she proudly said of Bordallo, who's a mountaineer.

At the party, Richele Flores was a vision of love. She and longtime boyfriend Dario Navarro have set the date (April 12) and venue (their hometown, Meycauayan, Bulacan) but he had yet to formally propose. "I don't mind if he doesn't give me a ring," she said, "but if he does, I want it to be a surprise." She got her wish when Navarro proposed to her that evening, with the collaboration of the Ranas, of course.

"Everybody thinks it's only the girl who's excited about the wedding," said Navarro, "but that's not true. The groom also wants everything to be perfect, especially for her."

A first in the country, the website www.weddingsatwork.com carries a comprehensive list of wedding suppliers

LOVE FROM DOWN UNDER. Francis Buenaventura will fly home this month from Sydney, Australia, to wed April Tupas.

Labor of love

"We didn't have (this kind of) service when we got married," said Bennette, "and we thought, 'Wouldn't it be nice to have one?' We had a lovely wedding, but it would have been easier had there been something like W@W then. Now we're making it easier for other couples."

The Ranas, who are vegetable wholesalers, don't make money from their efforts. "It's a labor of love," John smilingly explained, "and my wife would not have gone into W@W had I not been interested, too." His wife said they listed all available suppliers on the website "and leave the members to give the feedback. We personally don't make suggestions on who to hire."

But Bennette answers e-mailed queries, like how to deal with future in-laws.

The website also provides information on laws on interracial marriages, Philippine laws on marriage, customs and traditions, trends and interesting accounts of the members' own engagements and weddings.

The Ranas said with pride that W@W members, most of whom they only "talked" to online, had become life-long friends. "It's a community. They know each other's 'issues' and concerns, so they end up becoming friends," said Bennette, now a mom to two-year-old Kitty.

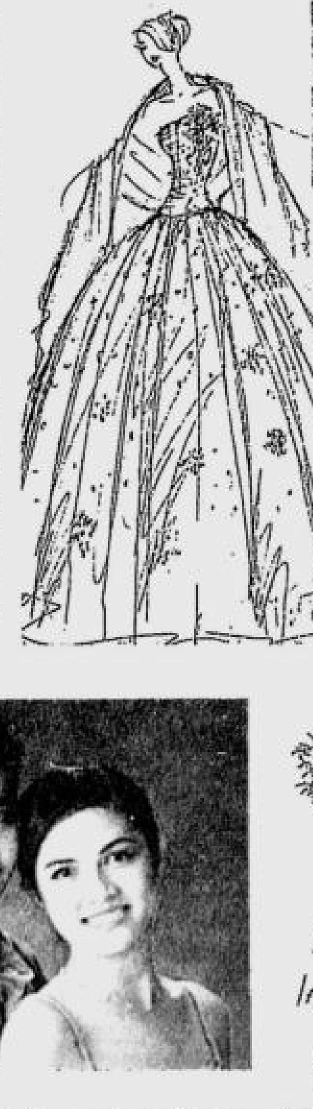
In fact, she said, W@Wies remained members even after their weddings. "There were some who were so pleased at the turnout of their big day that they ended up as wedding planners," she laughingly added.

Milestones

We're accepting announcements of weddings and engagements. Please send the following typewritten information: names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, gown designer and other related information. Readers can send sketches of gowns and pictures of the couple at least two weeks before the wedding. This will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the sender.

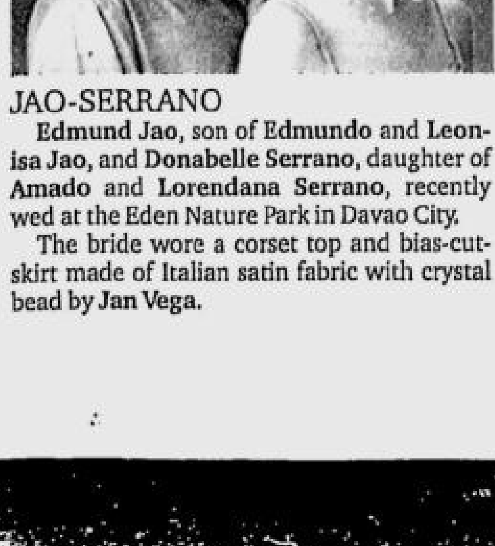
GAPUD DEBUT

Joanna Michelle R. Gapud, daughter of **Valentino** and **Myrna Gapud**, celebrated her 18th birthday recently at the Penthouse of Manila Midtown Hotel. She wore a **June Marcelino** creation.



PINGOY DEBUT

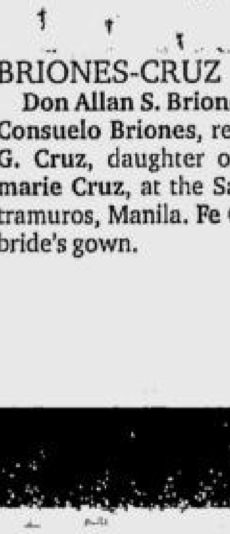
Anna Katrina Garcia Pingoy, daughter of South Cotabato Rep. **Arthur Jr.** and **Annabelle Pingoy**, celebrated her 18th birthday on Dec. 30 at the South Cotabato Gym and Cultural Center in Koronadal. The debutante, a sophomore at the University of the Philippines, wore a **Randy Ortiz** gown.

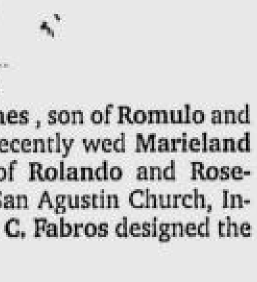


JAO-SERRANO

Edmund Jao, son of **Edmundo** and **Leonisa Jao**, and **Donabelle Serrano**, daughter of **Amado** and **Lorendana Serrano**, recently wed at the Eden Nature Park in Davao City.

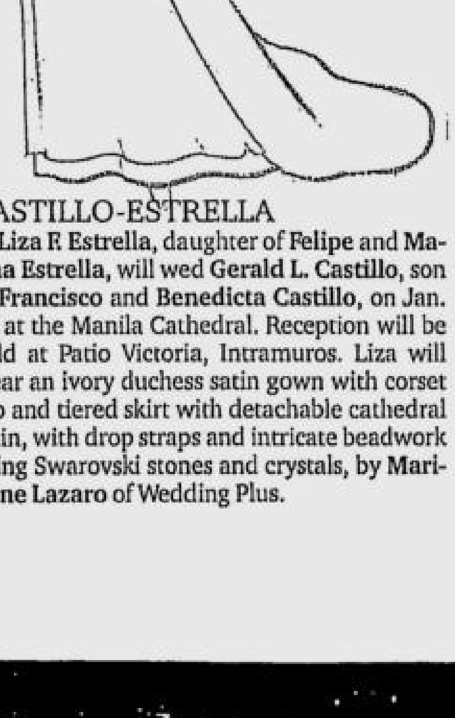
The bride wore a corset top and bias-cut-skirt made of Italian satin fabric with crystal bead by **Jan Vega**.





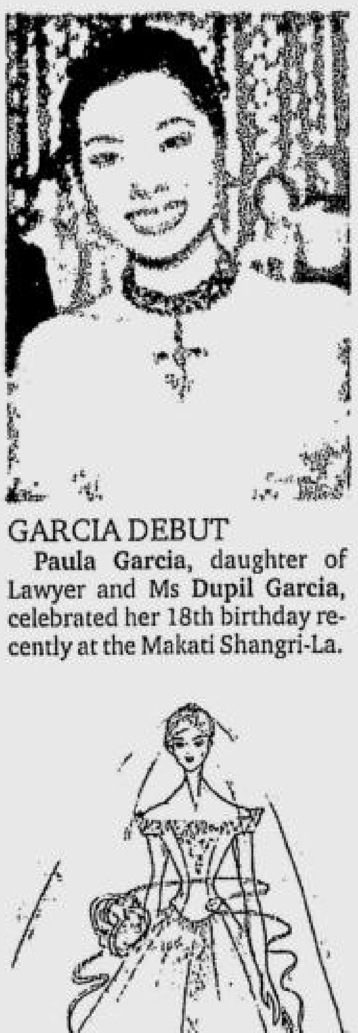
BRIONES-CRUZ

Don Allan S. Briones , son of **Romulo** and **Consuelo Briones**, recently wed **Marieland G. Cruz**, daughter of **Rolando** and **Rosemarie Cruz**, at the San Agustin Church, Intramuros, Manila. **Fe C. Fabros** designed the bride's gown.



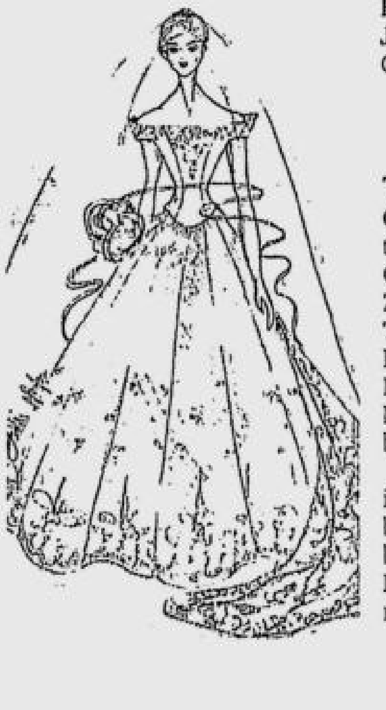
CASTILLO-ESTRELLA

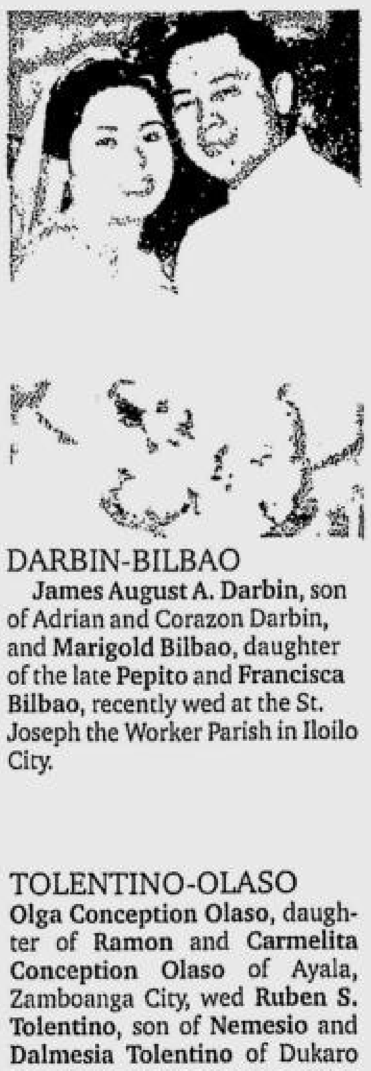
Liza F. Estrella, daughter of **Felipe** and **Marina Estrella**, will wed **Gerald L. Castillo**, son of **Francisco** and **Benedicta Castillo**, on Jan. 11 at the Manila Cathedral. Reception will be held at Patio Victoria, Intramuros. Liza will wear an ivory duchess satin gown with corset top and tiered skirt with detachable cathedral train, with drop straps and intricate beadwork using Swarovski stones and crystals, by **Marianne Lazaro** of Wedding Plus.



GARCIA DEBUT

Paula Garcia, daughter of Lawyer and Ms **Dupil Garcia**, celebrated her 18th birthday recently at the Makati Shangri-La.





DARBIN-BILBAO

James August A. Darbin, son of Adrian and Corazon Darbin, and **Marigold Bilbao**, daughter of the late **Pepito** and **Francisca Bilbao**, recently wed at the St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Iloilo City.

TOLENTINO-OLASO

Olga Conception Olaso, daughter of **Ramon** and **Carmelita Conception Olaso** of Ayala, Zamboanga City, wed **Ruben S. Tolentino**, son of **Nemesio** and **Dalmesia Tolentino** of Dukaro Mongkado, Tarlac, on Dec. 30 at Marcian Garden Camen's, Zamboanga City.

The bride wore a bustier corset in bridal satin with intricate embroidery mixed with stone cut beads and pearls. The **Elmer Neri Diego** creation had a three-meter train attached to the veil.

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Sunday LIFESTYLE

Heart in the right places

PURPLE HEART. Heart wears a turtleneck sweater from Benetton and Swatch Bijoux Prismatic earrings and cross necklace.

Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Jun de Leon

Whether as VJ, singer, actress or product endorser, squeaky-cute Heart Evangelista continues to steal young men's hearts

AS if on cue, the room brightens up. Clad in a white tee, black jogging pants and sneakers, she enters the room in quick strides, with a bright, almost tentative smile that turns her pretty Oriental eyes into creases. She extends her arms and introduces herself. "Hi, I'm Heart," she says. Like a real pro, she swiftly sits in front of the makeshift dresser, ready to work.

Heart Evangelista—actress, VJ, singer, product endorser and now Pink fashion magazine image model—is a month shy of her 18th birthday (on Feb. 14).

"I don't wear makeup when I'm not working," she says when told how young she looked. On-cam or off, nothing touches her lips but some gloss. Her fine Asian features become even more charming with her childlike verve. The look has endeared her to fans and admirers.

Heart is a refreshing departure from patrician-featured peers in the entertainment industry. It's not just her pretty face that makes one take a second look. She delights a roomful of strangers with her bubbly spirit and warm, ready smile—a trait, she says, that rubbed on her while growing up in sunny California.

"Some people think that it's a put-on," she confesses, "but even before I got into this business, I'd smile at strangers, whether in the mall or across the street."

The girl is as real as one can get, with only her road manager and girl Friday in tow as giveaway to her celebrity. She gets lost in her animated prattle, but listens intently when spoken to. Unlike some of her peers who grew up in the West, she speaks Tagalog without any trace of her childhood in America. She relishes her post-shoot fast-food chicken dinner with gusto, right arm resting on her right knee, left leg dangling from her chair.

"It sometimes makes me uneasy when people fuss over me," Heart says. "When all this is over, where will that leave me?"

Typical teenager

Like most girls her age, Heart's eyes light up when the subject of clothes comes up.

"I like to look cool and casual," she says, adding with a giggle how she used up her earnings before on clothes alone. "I liked to look funky all the time, so I would buy a lot of stuff."

Realizing how much she had spent, the girl smartened up and developed her personal style. Now she manipulates the pieces in her wardrobe—a tweak here, a snip there—so they never look like she had worn them before.

Heart is not a slave to brands. She has no qualms about wearing something bought in, say, the Greenhills *tiangge*. "You can make anything look nice. It's just a matter of putting things together." The only thing in her closet she can't live without? "My jogging pants!" she says with a grin.

The girl is not boy-crazy. Believe it or not, she says, she doesn't even have suitors. "It's true!" she laughs. "But it wouldn't hurt to have [suitors] to boost me up."

She giggles when told Nic, top lensman Jun de Leon's 15-year-old son, has a huge crush on her, and gamely poses for a photo with the young man.

The youngest child, Heart says she's not yet allowed to date. "But I can stay out late with friends." Chaperoned, naturally.

Good daughter

With a thriving career, the young actress-VJ hardly has free time. She has several TV shows and makes movies in between. She veejays on the music channel MYX and will al-

HEART/ E3

ANSWER TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD

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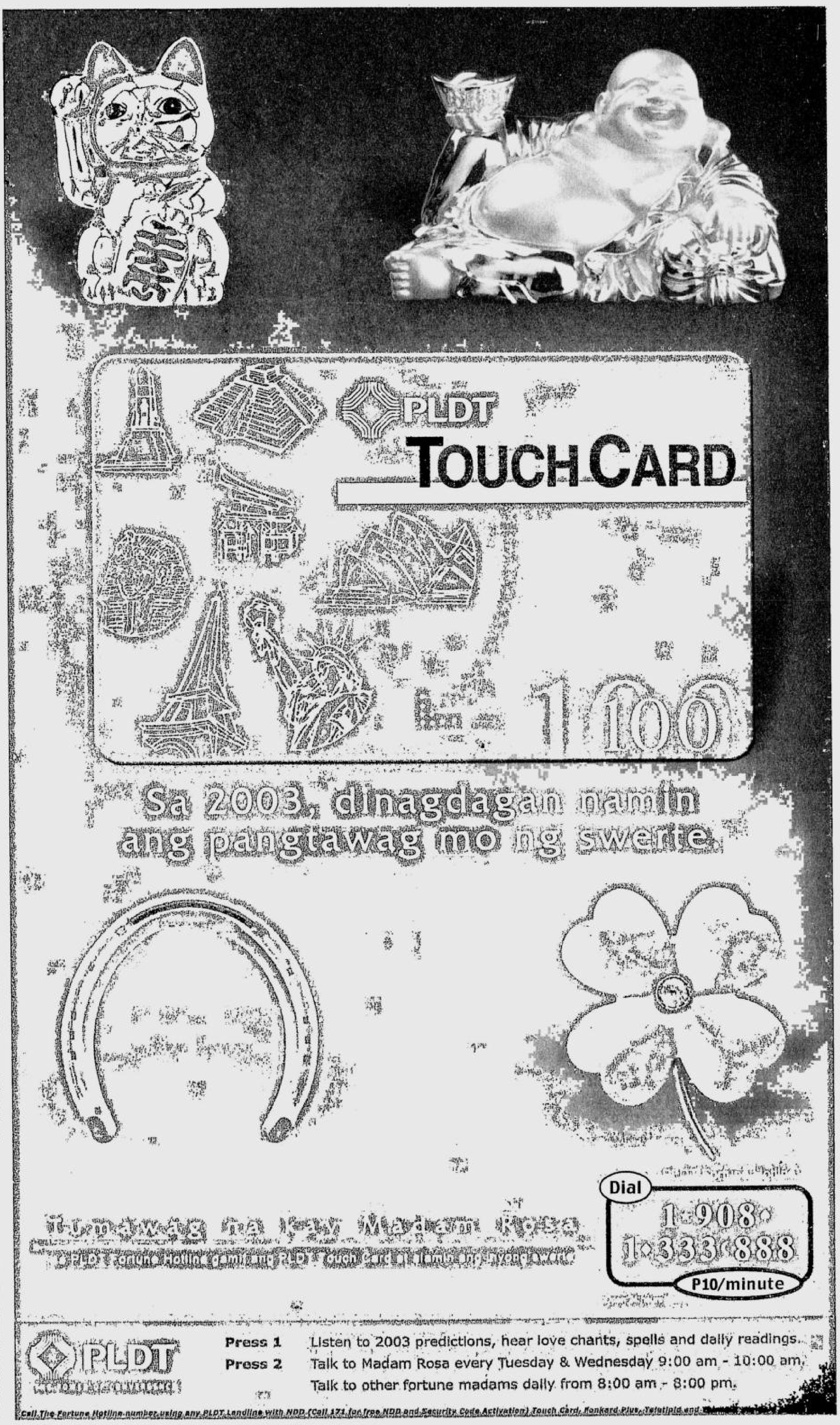
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Flashbacking to Bacolod

By Tessa Prieto-Valdes

HIGH-SCHOOL batchmates and their wives: Joey and Rosette Benedicto, Anton and Alexis Lacson, and Dennis and Tessa Valdes

IF you go to any part of the world where there are Filipinos (and these days, that's just about everywhere!), you're bound to hear someone speaking in a sweet, singsong manner. For me, the most feminine dialect of all in our country is Ilonggo, the native tongue of people from Bacolod City in Negros Occidental.

Landing in Bacolod, I was amazed to be in the Ilonggo heartland, where everyone sounds like my husband, Dennis, whenever he talks to our house help. Our whole family had come to Sugarlandia for Dennis's 25th high school reunion at the University of St. La Salle.

Right upon arrival, I was looking for the conveyor belt to get my luggage when I realized there was none! Just porters handing the luggage over an iron railing—it's a good thing we had hired a driver to assist us for this trip.

True test

Since Cebu Pacific arrived on time as usual, I thought we would have time to drop by the House of Negros Showroom—the best handicraft store in town—but Dennis discouraged me from spurring the local economy right away, since we had dinner plans with his classmates.

We met Joey and Rosette Benedicto and Anton and Alexis Lacson at 21, a trendy eatery on the main road—Lacson Street—then met the rest of Batch '78 at Time Out, a bar cum billiards place where San Miguel flowed freely. Seeing the rest of the boys, I'd say Dennis has kept himself well and fit compared to the rest of his fortysomething classmates.

The true test for reunions is to see if you still recognize your classmates despite all the physical changes—and to see whether they recognize you, too. Dennis could not remember a couple of the men but quickly did after sniffing their nametags. Thank God for those nametags—they sure prevent a lot of embarrassing situations.

Shopping

I spent the next day in Bacolod doing what I love best—shopping. Together with my kids, we had lunch and bought up the native delicacies at Pendy's (again, right on the main road!). I got mango tarts, *pia-ya*, *galletas*, *barquillos*, meringue, etc., etc.—our purchases all had to be boxed up by the super-helpful staff. Surprised to see me at Pendy's were Felix and Reggie Barrientos, who were spending the holidays with Felix's in-laws, the Jacinto family.

After a short stop at the Robinsons mall (although Alexis Lacson calls it a "mallette" compared to the Manila malls) to get my son Tyrone the toy *du jour*, the Bey Blade, I finally got to go to the House of Negros. Since I am currently doing a couple of interior decoration projects in Tagaytay, I was so excited to find the source of those pressed coco shell balls, picture frames, trays and baskets. I got so excited I practically bought up the whole store and even had to have some items shipped home separately. We can really be proud of quite a number of Filipino product.

Main event

The main event for the reunion weekend was the "Alumni Power! Goldmembers" show at the University of St. La Salle that evening. After Mass and a short chat with Bro. Ceci Hojilla, who took care of my kids the day before, there was a whole night of food and fun with the different local bands playing on stage. The smell of chicken *inasal* was everywhere. Well, I guess that's one thing to expect if you come to Bacolod.

Batch '78's claim to fame is their batchmate Joel Torre. He spearheaded a fund-raising play called "Hiblang Abo" three years ago in preparation for the reunion—and the fact that the batch had funds showed.

For the night's program, Joel was once again on stage, together with director Erik Matti, and local talents Dwight Gaston and the twins Fergus and Erin Martir. With the help of alumni president Ramon Arriola and batch president Anton Lacson, the whole night was a blast, with special guests Mitch Valdes (no relation it turns out, shucks) and Jaime Fabregas, who were all so kind to donate their time and talents to La Salle.

Super special

But the super special guest of the night, who made all the Ilonggo's drop their collective jaws and salivate in unison, was Aubrey Miles. Dressed in super-tight jeans and a guttery, sleeveless turtleneck blouse, she looked just like teenage idol Mandy Moore (no offense, Ben).

Since Aubrey arrived early for her part in the program, we were able to have a dinner together with her manager, Pola Punla. I actually met Aubrey at the Bench Christmas concert earlier last month. She was so accommodating, posing for pictures and signing autographs for all the Negrenses. She also performed a couple of songs for the crowd, and despite some technical difficulties, was totally cool-headed and didn't walk out (unlike some at the recent filmfest).

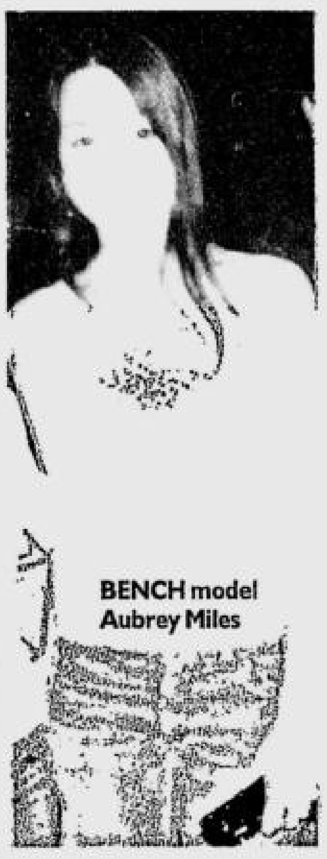
I remember the only other time I had been to Bacolod was quite a while back when I was on a high school Easter break with my classmates, Jojo Ongsiako, Isabel Lacson, Annabelle Bautista, Emilie Ochoa and Marichu Alcasid. All I recall was that everyone just drank and ate there. Twentysomething years later, it's nice to know that some things never change. I was looking for my high-school crush, Nacho Arnaiz, but he was nowhere to be found.

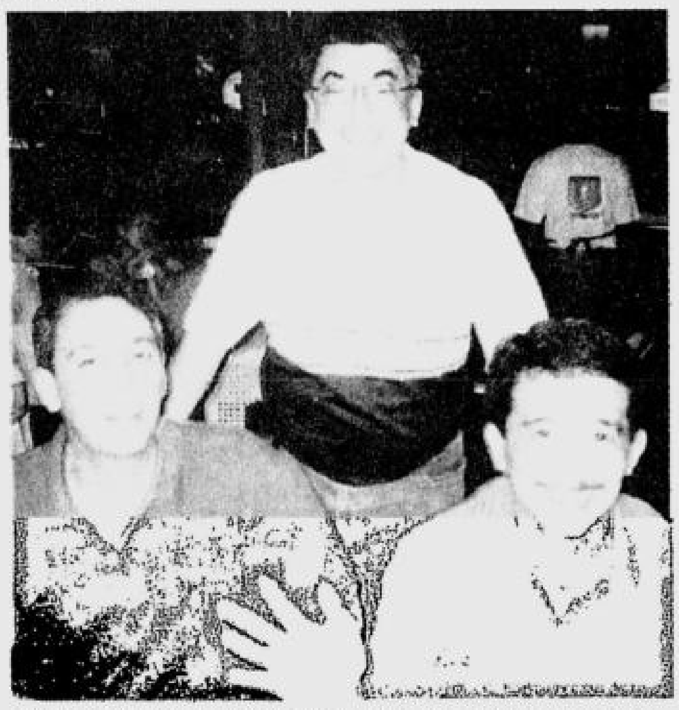
Bacolod is quite a laid-back vacation place. You can take your kids fishing at Jewels in Villadolid or go up the mountains and stay at Buenos Aires Resort in Araal. But if I lived there, I know I would gain 20 pounds and have 10 children, so I'm sure glad Dennis and I live in Manila!

I would say that Batch '78's silver anniversary reunion was a smashing success. I guess it's the heartwarming memories, the rekindling of old friendships and the communicating with past classmates that makes any reunion a success.

The true test at reunions is to see if you still recognize your classmates despite all the years and they recognize you, too

JOEL Torre in costume for the "Alumni Power! Goldmembers" show together with batch president Anton Lacson


BENCH model Aubrey Miles


UNIVERSITY of St. La Salle alumni president Ramon Arriola (standing) with Batch '78 mainstays Luis Longa and Joey Mempin at Timeout Bar in Bacolod City

AUBREY Miles with sugar planter Henry Yusay (nursing a beer) and Dwight Gaston in costume

TESSA touching base with husband Dennis' classmate, Joel Torre (left), and La Salle Brother Ceci Hojilla

---

Celebration of classics and fine dining

CEBU CEBU

Jaime Picornell

DOUGLAS and **Annabelle Lu Ym**, together with their only daughter **Amanda**, invited close friends and relations to an evening of classical music and fine dining at the Atlantic Hall of the Waterfront Cebu City Hotel. It was to celebrate Annabelle's birthday, giving dear friends **Danding** and **Gretchen Cojuangco** good reason to leave their Bacolod domain on a Lear jet and attend the party.

The program featured the String Ensemble from the Peace Philharmonic Philippines (PPP) conducted by **Jeffrey Solares**. They started with a most apt piece, "A Little Night Music" by Mozart. Then came Elgar's "Salut d'Amour," the brilliant waltz from Tchaikovsky's "Serenade for Strings," and the prelude from Grieg's "Hollberg Suite."

Ingrid Sala Santamaria did a piano solo, the Chopin etude, which everyone knows as "No Other Love." For the finale, she played with the Strings the first movement from Tchaikovsky's Concerto in D with **Bryan Cimafranca** as violin soloist.

Douglas led the toasts, and the hall resounded with "Cheers, cheers!" as everyone raised his glass to a truly lovable lady. Annabelle just said, "Thank you, from the bottom of my heart."

***

Leah de los Santos is a Filipina singer who is reaping rave reviews in Europe for her performances in Broadway hits such as "Miss Saigon," "Beauty and the Beast," "Cats," etc. She has an excellent leading man in Norwegian singer **Yngve Gasoy-Romdal**, and together they are more than making nice music.

They came to Cebu, invited by **Carlos** and **Mariquita Yeung**, to perform in a program dubbed "Music of the Night," which filled the SM City Cebu Theater One to full capacity for two consecutive nights. All for an excellent cause—Operation Smile, which is an annual undertaking of Mariquita's charitable foundation.

Cathay Pacific flew them in together with the band members: **Andreas Hartwig** (piano and keyboards), **Stefan Obermann** (guitar), **Jon Diven** (bass) and **Daniel Fleischmann** (drums). Preconcert preparations were efficiently handled by **Benjie Diola**, president of the Mariquita S. Yeung Foundation, and its executive director, **Monette Alino**.

Leah was praised for her lilting voice and capacity for drama. Yngve, of slight build, is capable of great volume with his powerful voice. They alternated between solos and duets, moving through the elaborately decorated stage with elegant furnishings and art objects from the Yeungs' Villa Mariquita.

There must have been 25 songs in the program, which featured well-known tunes from "West Side Story," "Phantom of the Opera," "Jekyll and Hyde," "Evita," "Sweet Charity," "Sunday in the Park with George," "Hair," "Aspects of Love," "Scarlet Pimpernel" and "Funny Girl," with Yngve doing the Streisand number "Don't Rain on My Parade."

More numbers came from "Saturday Night Fever," "Merrily We Roll Along," "Company," "Miss Saigon" (the duet "Sun and Moon"), "King and I," "Annie Get Your Gun" (the hilarious duet of "Anything You Can Do"), "Jesus Christ Superstar" and "Once On This Island."

Second-night concertgoers were in for an extra song that hushed everyone to rapture—Leah singing Henry Mancini's "Moon River," and who doesn't swoon to those lyrics by Johnny Mercier? They had a fabulous show in Cagayan de Oro as well, invited by **Joe** and **Oche Golez** at their Liceo de Cagayan University gym for the benefit of a foundation, which helps save the Cagayan River from pollution. And they will be performing in Manila this year also for the benefit of Operation Smile. It goes without saying that Cebu expects an encore.

For Carlos and Mariquita, Benjie and Monette, the following weeks will be quite busy in preparation for the Operation Smile Medical Mission in February. Led by teams of doctors, nurses, dentists, volunteers and staff of varied nationalities and originating from Virginia (USA), the mission, as in other years, expects to conduct operations on children, and some adults with hare lip and other facial disfigurements. Some 300 are chosen from the very poor. The operations don't just put a smile on their faces, but change the whole perspective of their future.

Leah and Yngve performed for free after she came last February to Cebu to see the Operation Smile interventions. Maybe they'll return for the next one, capped as it is by a round of celebrations as the Yeung couple, their family, and numerous friends entertain the visitors with parties and outings. Mariquita's birthday always coincides with the awards night, and so does Carlos' and her wedding anniversary. 2003 marks their 25th!

GEMA Pido

ANNABELLE Lu Ym

DOUGLAS Lu Ym and daughter Amanda

INGRID Sala Santamaria and Jeffrey Solares

YNGVE Gasoy-Romdal and Leah de los Santos

CHAMELEON. The innocent-looking Heart morphs into a beguiling young woman in knit wool scarf, embroidered denim pants and black printed asymmetrical top, all from Benetton; Swatch Black Jeans; and woven flip-flops from Estilo.

[illegible]

Heart in the right places

From page E1

so soon record an album.

With product endorsements on the side, Heart has tucked a couple of awards under her belt, both for acting and singing. She is a natural in front of the camera that earns her compliments from De Leon.

Heart admits her work can get very exhausting, "but it's fun and I love it so I don't mind!"

Now on home-study program, Heart says she still gets good grades but has to work doubly hard. "This opportunity comes only once so I'm making the most of it, but I'll never sacrifice school," she says firmly. She, however, misses her "uniform and backpack" days in Colegio San Agustin.

Whatever free time she has, Heart spends with her mom shopping and dining out. But like typical moms and daughters, they also get into petty tiffs.

"Sometimes it's just about [my] clothes," she laughs. Ever a good daughter, she always gives in—sometimes with a heavy heart. "She knows better so it's okay," she adds with a smile.

Heart has done so much in her two short years in show biz. And it's no mean feat for someone who dreamed as a child of becoming nothing but an actress.

"If you're an onlooker, you might think things are going too fast for me, but I hardly notice because I love my work. I can stay here forever!"

An industry perpetually mired in intrigues and scandals sure could use a Heart like this.

WOMAN-CHILD. She's in a printed tee and denim skirt from Benetton; note Swatch Squaw around her wrist.

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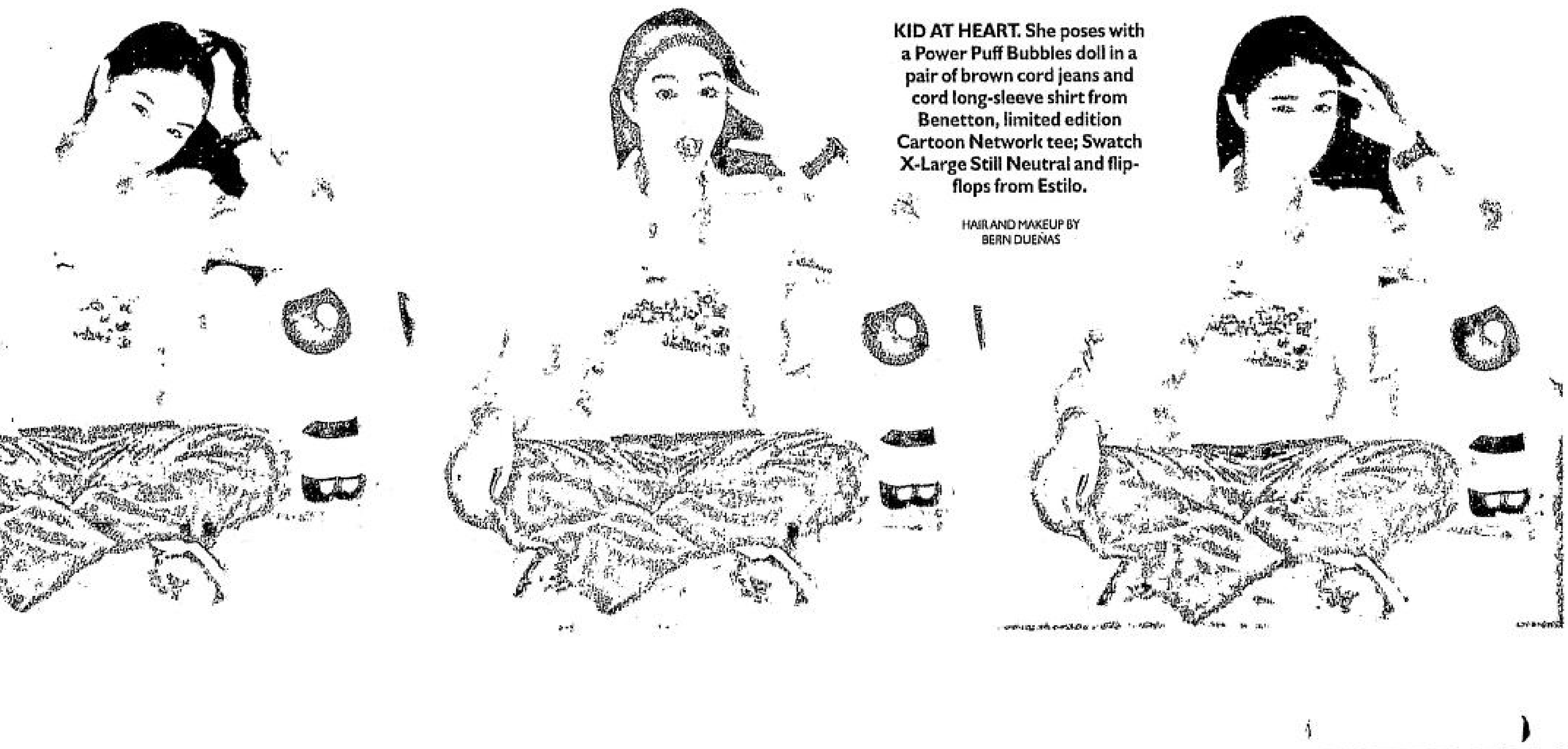
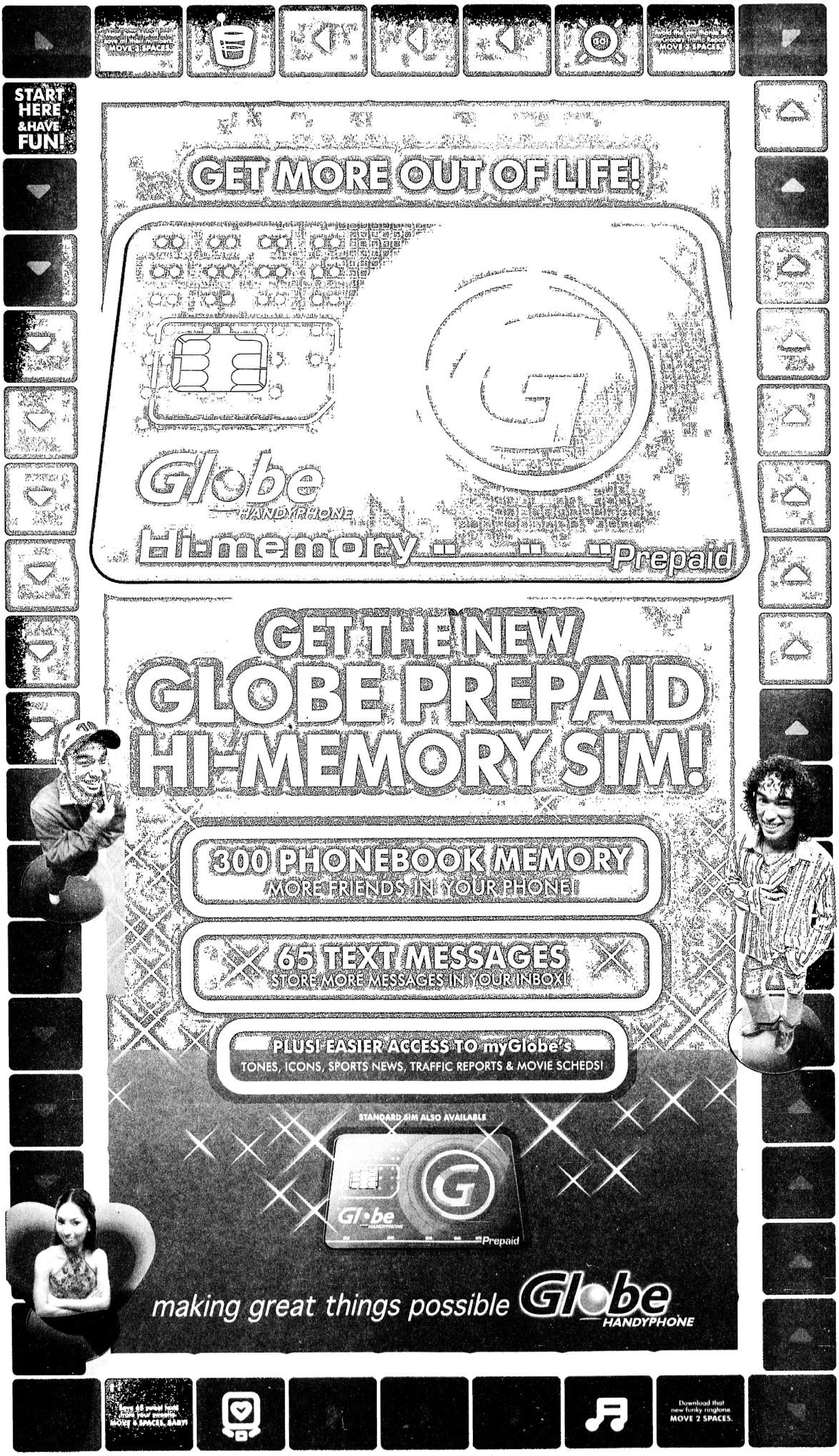


KID AT HEART. She poses with a Power Puff Bubbles doll in a pair of brown cord jeans and cord long-sleeve shirt from Benetton, limited edition Cartoon Network tee; Swatch X-Large Still Neutral and flip-flops from Estilo.

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY
BERN DUEÑAS



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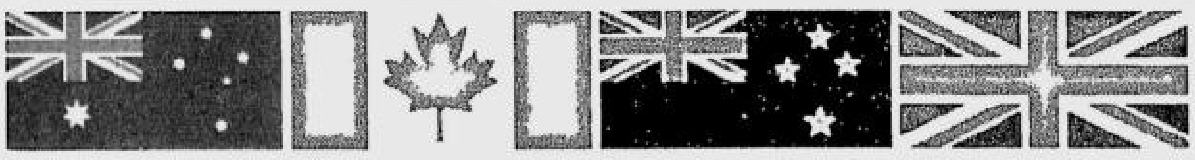

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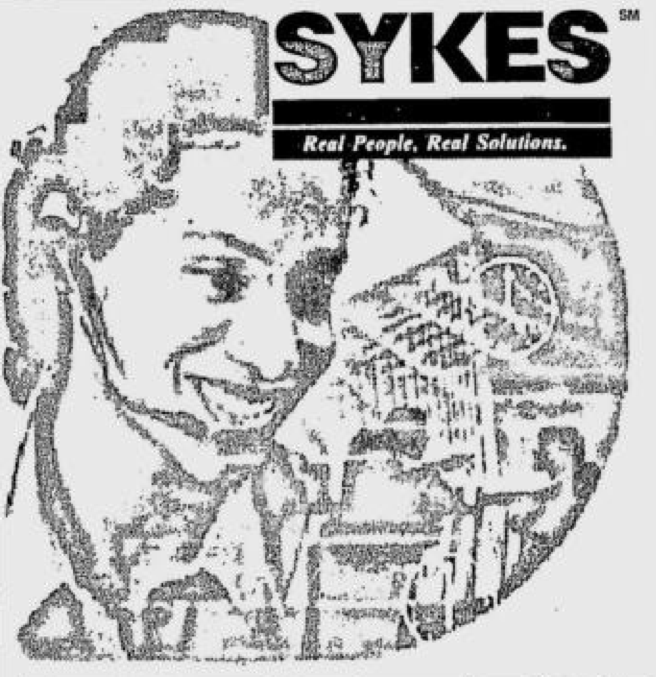

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If you are a dynamic, assertive, confident, self-motivated and customer oriented individual – Then we have the job for you! Due to our current expansion, Sykes is currently looking for intelligent TECHNICAL SUPPORT ENGINEERS and CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES for our various Project Accounts.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT ENGINEERS FOR CISCO (CCNA)

- Experienced in Networking configuration field preferably with knowledge in Dial technologies, TCP/IP, ISDN, and PPP Protocol
- Experienced in data communications and network installations
- Knowledge in WAN technologies such as CSU/DSU""s, Frame relay with experience in network security including Radius and TACACS with extensive troubleshooting skills
- CCNA certification a requirement
- Works well under pressure to resolve issues, achieve goals and objectives
- Fluent in English and excellent business writing skills

LAN SPECIALISTS

- Graduate of Computer Science, Computer Engineering or any related course
- With hardware and software troubleshooting experience
- Previous Windows NT Administration experience, preferred
- Demonstrated analytical, organizational and customer service skills
- Proven ability to manage multiple projects with minimal supervision
- Must be willing to work on shifting schedule

100 TECHNICAL SUPPORT ENGINEERS (TSE)

- Graduate of any college course preferably Computer Science,Computer Engineering or any computer-related courses
- Knowledgeable in basic hardware and software troubleshooting and networking
- Familiar with the different Operating Systems (Windows, Linux, Macintosh)
- Excellent reading comprehension skills, problem solving and data analysis skills
- Has the ability to absorb and utilize complex information
- Has initiative, an eye for detail and excellent customer service skills
- Basic knowledge of web technology and the Internet
- Fluent in English and excellent business writing skills

CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES

- Graduate of any college course
- Strong customer service orientation and willing to work on shifting schedule
- Knowledgeable on the Internet, MS Office applications and on Macromedia products, would be an advantage

ACCOUNT SUPERVISORS

- One year related experience in the Call Center industry
- Previous Product and Client responsibility
- Minimum of one year previous people management experience in telemarketing/ customer service environment
- Sales and marketing experience required
- Experience of negotiation and diplomacy, in budget management and the ability to analyze statistical information
- Fluent English communication skills both written and spoken
- Proven leadership, counselling and coaching skills
- Effective business proposal and report writing
- Analytical and problem solving skills

As these are URGENT position vacancies, qualified applicants are requested to send their updated CV's to: SYKES ASIA, INC., 28F Robinson's Summit Building, Ayala Ave., Makati City or e-mail these to hrd@man.ph.sykes.com on or before January 7, 2003. Highly competitive compensation package and Local/Regional Training await those who will be accepted. Visit http://www.sykes.com for more information about the Company.

Hot 8

1) ROCHE PHILS. F2
2) BUSINESS TRENDS PHILS. F2
3) CENTURY PARK HOTEL F3
4) SPORTSHOUSE F3
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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Roche

Consumer Health

Product Manager

Application Code: RPM

Who we are

Founded in 1896 in Basel, Switzerland, Roche has grown from a small drug laboratory into one of the world's leading research-based healthcare companies. The company is known for many innovative contributions to medicine and healthcare. We have been operating successfully in the Philippines for over 38 years.

The Position

Reporting to the Marketing Director of the Consumer Health Division, the chosen candidate will be responsible for new product development as well as marketing existing brands. The role includes development and management of consumer advertising campaigns, promotions and research projects, doctor promotion and in-store merchandising. He/She must be able to manage brands for long term sales growth and profitability. A competitive compensation and benefits package plus a generous car plan are offered for the position.

Who you are

To qualify, you must possess a college degree in Marketing, Business Management or related course with at least 2 years experience in consumer product marketing. Pharmaceutical/medical marketing exposure is a help but not mandatory. Leadership, outstanding communication & interpersonal skills, proficiency in MS Office are required. You must be a strategic thinker, analytical, motivated, hardworking and self driven.

Who to Contact

Submit your resumé with recent passport size picture and contact telephone number no later than ***Friday, 10 January 2003*** to:

The Human Resources Department - Application Code RPM
Roche (Philippines) Inc.
2252 Don Chino Roces Avenue, 1231 Makati City

Only qualified candidates will be called for interview.

BusinessTrends
A KELLY SERVICES COMPANY

Business Trends Philippines
Unit 1603, Jollibee Plaza,
Emerald Avenue,
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Tel (632) 6313109
Email btphils@vasia.com
www.businesstrends.com.sg

Our Philippine Office is currently in need of highly aggressive professionals to fill in the following positions:

ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

The position would require a candidate with vision, excellent communication and people skills, preferably an executive with a well-rounded background, with a minimum of 5 years extensive experience in Operations, Strategic Planning, HR and Administration, as well as Marketing and Sales. Business Development functions are also critical to the position and knowledge in Finance is an advantage. The person must be target-driven and challenged to expand the operations of the business.

SENIOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVE

A graduate of Marketing or any related course, with a proven track record of consistently high sales performance, with 2 to 3 years experience in handling corporate accounts and has acquired wide contacts in various industries. The person must be highly proficient in the preparation of proposals, contracts and business correspondences as well as being highly experienced in conducting client calls and sales/marketing presentations. He/She must have excellent written and oral communication skills, mature, organized and very attentive to detail.

EXECUTIVE RECRUITER

A graduate of Human Resource Management, Psychology or Behavioral Science, with at least 5 years experience in Executive Search Recruitment. Can easily deal with high profile/senior level position candidates. He/She must be process-oriented, results-driven and must possess excellent oral and written communication skills.

STORE MANAGERS

Graduate of Hotel & Restaurant Management or any Business-related course, preferably with 2-3 years experience in fast food business. Excellent communication and public relations skills with orientation in customer service and sales. Candidates from North and South Luzon are highly encouraged to apply.

Be with the best!

AHEAD Learning Systems, Inc. is the company responsible for the success of AHEAD Tutorial & Review Center and WorldPrep Learning Center. AHEAD offers the best review classes for the admission tests of top colleges and universities and tutorials for all subjects from preschool to graduate level. WorldPrep is a very dynamic and innovative preschool. As part of our growth, we are inviting applicants with excellent interpersonal and communication skills to fill the following positions:

ADMINISTRATIVE AND HR MANAGER
BRANCH MANAGER
OPERATIONS MANAGER
MARKETING MANAGER
- With at least 3 years working experience
- Prepared to do multi tasking
- Excellent customer service orientation
- College graduate, 25 to 40 years old

MANAGEMENT TRAINEES
- With at least 1-2 years working experience in the field of marketing or management
- Prepared to do multi-tasking
- Excellent customer service orientation
- College graduate, 22 to 30 years old

PART/FULL-TIME LECTURERS
- Honor graduates or teachers of UP, Ateneo, La Salle
- Bar or board topnotchers
- Law or medicine graduates and students with outstanding scholastic records
- Has good rapport with young people

PART/FULL-TIME TUTORS
- Graduates/students of UP, Ateneo, La Salle, or PSHS
- Has good rapport with young people
- For Science, Math, or Language – as well as foreign languages, accounting, and computer subjects

COORDINATORS FOR TUTORIAL SERVICES
- Highly organized and detail oriented
- Excellent customer service orientation
- With at least 1 year working experience in administrative work
- Prepared to do multi-tasking
- UP or Ateneo graduate, 23 to 27 years old

RECEPTIONIST
HR ASSISTANT
CLERKS
STUDENT ASSISTANTS

SECRETARIES
OFFICE ASSISTANTS
PART-TIME LAYOUT ARTIST

Send your comprehensive resume, transcript of records, and two 2x2 pictures to:
THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT

AHEAD LEARNING SYSTEMS, INC.

309 KATIPUNAN AVENUE
LOYOLA HEIGHTS
QUEZON CITY

2/F PROVIDENCE BUILDING
55 ANNAPOLIS STREET
GREENHILLS, CITY OF SAN JUAN

5/F PEARL PLAZA
PEARL DRIVE, ORTIGAS CENTER
PASIG CITY

149 B GONZALES STREET
LOYOLA HEIGHTS
QUEZON CITY

SM MEGAMALL
5TH FLOOR, BUILDING B
MANDALUYONG CITY

A TRIPLE "AAA" CONSTRUCTION FIRM
IS URGENTLY IN NEED OF:

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

- FEMALE, NOT MORE THAN 35 YEARS OLD
- GRADUATE OF ANY BUSINESS RELATED COURSE
- WITH 2 TO 5 YEARS EXPERIENCE AS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY IN A MEDIUM TO LARGE BUSINESS ENTITY
- PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IS A MUST, BOTH ORAL AND WRITTEN.
- BE ABLE TO WORK FOR EXTRA HOUR AND UNDER PRESSURE
- COMPUTER LITERATE

We will only reply to those who will qualify.

Qualified applicants are requested to send their comprehensive resumé with one (1) 2 x 2 picture (colored) to MR. JOJO BATALLA at #1760 Evangelista cor. Macabulos Street, Bangkal, Makati City.

OPPORTUNITY TO EARN DOLLARS

Writers, Graphic Designers,
Flash Programmers, Creative Directors

A leading US e-Learning company requires contractors in Manila to produce online learning programs.

WRITERS

- ✔ adept at business training and publications;
- ✔ with experience in instructional design

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

- ✔ proficient in Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator

CARTOONISTS

- ✔ illustrators, drawing designers

FLASH PROGRAMMERS

- ✔ with experience in vector graphics, audio and data tracking

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

- ✔ experience with Flash, Web development, story telling, training production.

Applicants must have own PC and high speed Internet connection. Please send e-mail resumés with links to work samples to awit@info.com.ph

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WANTED

By a leading Forklift Distributor

FOUR (4) FORKLIFT MECHANICS

QUALIFICATIONS:

- ☛ Trade school or vocational graduate on auto/diesel mechanics course
- ☛ At least 2 years experience in Heavy Equipment repair/maintenance
- ☛ Possession of driver's license is an advantage but not required.

Successful applicants must be willing to accept field/provincial assignments.

Apply at 2682 Hen. Cailles Street (near South Superhighway), Bangkal, Makati or Call Tel. 843-32-51/843-33-94 for appointment
Bring Biodata and 2 ID pictures

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DATA NETWORKS, INC.

URGENT HIRING!!!

Junior PROGRAMMER

Develop applications using Foxpro for DOS, Visual Foxpro, Visual Basic...

General Qualifications:

- ✓ M/F; 23-35 yrs. old
- ✓ Must be a graduate of Com. Sci./Com. Eng'g or other IT related courses
- ✓ With minimum 2 years related working experience
- ✓ Knowledge in Linux is an advantage
- ✓ Flexible, hardworking, trainable, resourceful, and with good interpersonal & communication skills

Qualified applicants may send their comprehensive resume with latest photo to:

Personnel Department
7/F Pacific Corporate Center, 131 West Avenue,
Quezon City

Note: Walk-in applicants will not be entertained;
Qualified applicants will be scheduled for written and hands-on exam

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A Well-Established Company and Leading Supplier of High Quality Electrical, Industrial and Lighting Products urgently needs

SALES MANAGER

Male/Female, not more than 40 yrs. old, Engineering/ Mktg/ Bus.Mgmt Graduate. Must have at least 5 years relevant experience and a good performance record in sales and marketing gained from a supply and distribution company.

Must have strong leadership qualities and be a good team player. Effective communicator; fluent in English and Tagalog. Analytical and well-experienced in formulating and implementing sales programs. Can organize training and presentations; can effectively train and motivate sales team to attain sales targets.

Candidates with knowledge in electrical products and can effectively communicate in Chinese preferred but not required.

PRODUCT MANAGER

Male/Female, not more than 40 yrs. old, Mech. Engineering graduate, preferably licensed with: at least 2 years experience in sales and marketing of ventilating/exhaust fans, knowledge in design and CAD operation, and familiar in handling industrial, dealers, and institutional accounts.

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES / SALES

Male/Female, no more than 35 yrs. old with pleasing personality. EE, ECE, ME, Mktg, MassCom, or Bus Mgmt graduate. At least 3 years sales experience and result-oriented. Experience or exposure in electrical and industrial sectors preferred.

PURCHASING OFFICER

Female, no more than 30 yrs. old, Acctg/Business/Engineering graduate with at least 1 year experience as purchaser and dealing/negotiating with local suppliers. Excellent oral communication skills in English and Chinese, resourceful, honest, hardworking, computer literate, proficient in MS Office, team player with leadership.

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

Female, not more than 35 yrs. old, Acctg. graduate, at least 3 years relevant experience, preferably certified and fully knowledgeable in all aspects of corporate accounting and finance.

Team player with strong leadership skills, capable of organizing and implementing industry-standard accounting system, policies and internal controls. Excellent oral communication skills in English and Chinese, computer literate, MS Office proficient.

DATABASE PROGRAMMER

Male/Female, not more than 30 yrs. old, Computer Science graduate with at least 2 years experience in applications programming using relational DBMS. Must be knowledgeable and proficient in Delphi.

GRAPHIC ARTIST

Male/Female, not more than 30 yrs. old. Min. 2-3 yrs. experience in graphic design. Must be knowledgeable and proficient in PageMaker, PhotoShop, Dreamweaver, Corel; Able to conceptualize and design for print and/or web.

Interested applicants are invited to apply personally with comprehensive resume, TOR, employment certificates and colored photo (2 x 2) to:

Le Marben Classic Condominium
676 Florentino Torres Street corner Soler, Sta. Cruz, Manila
(Back of National Bookstore) Tel. 733-83-54 to 56
E-mail: zgchrd@vasia.com
Look for Mr. Angelo Villanueva / Engr. Benjie Rosario

Send those resumés instantly.
JOBMarket ONLINE
www.jobmarketonline.com

WANTED

SALES AGENT

Requirements:

- College graduate of any college course
- Not more than 39 years old
- With good written and verbal communication skills
- Team player, capable of handling multi-task
- Computer literate
- Can work with less supervision
- Must be responsible, honest, hardworking, willing to learn
- Must have initiative, ability, and sustained interest in selling
- Willing to do fieldwork

Qualified candidates are requested to submit their comprehensive resumé thru handcarry, mail, or e-mail not later than __January 15, 2003__ to:

ASIA FOOD CANNING MANUFACTURING
653 J.P. Rizal St., Concepcion Marikina City
E-mail address: afcmph@yahoo.com

WANTED

Accounting Clerk

- Age 23 - 35
- Male or female
- Has actual experience in accounting work for 2 to 3 years

Send your resumé with picture at:

System for Information Technology, Inc. (SFIT)
West 701 Tektite Bldg. PSE, San Antonio
1605 Pasig City, Philippines
Tel. : (63-2) 633-8378
Fax : (63-2) 633-8376
E-mail : sfit@sfit.com.ph
Contact person : Ms. Jhanette

sports house

ACCOUNTING HEAD

- Female, must be Accounting graduate.
- Willing to work under pressure.
- With at least one year working experience.
- Knowledgeable in preparing Financial Statement.

AUDIT HEAD

- Female, must be Accounting graduate.
- Must be a computer literate.
- Willing to travel.
- Knowledgeable in POS System and Inventory Audit.

IT STAFF

- Female, must be a computer course graduate.
- With background in Relational Database Management System (RDBMS).
- With knowledge in PC troubleshooting.

You may send your resumé at:
19 Pecton Building Gilmore Avenue
New Manila, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 721-2480 / 721-5553,
Fax No. 722-2869
Email: sports@sportshouse.com.ph

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If you are a young, dynamic, confident, self-motivated and customer-oriented individual – Then we have the job for you!

ONLY THOSE WITH VALID US VISAS WILL BE ENTERTAINED FOR THIS OPENING.

Qualified applicants need to join the company by January 13, 2003.

20 CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES – MORTGAGE AND FINANCE (Job Code: CSR-MF)

- Graduate of Accounting, Finance, or similar Business courses *and/or* experience in the banking or finance or banking industry. Applicant must possess at least one of the aforementioned.
- Fluent in English, good business writing and course skills
- Proficient in MS Office and the internet
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Willing to work on shifting schedules, including graveyard shifts
- Must have a valid US Visa.

QUALITY COACH- MORTGAGE AND FINANCE (JOB CODE: QC-MF)

- Preferably a graduate of Finance, Statistics, or Industrial Engineering
- At least six months to 1.5 years relevant quality assurance experience, a requirement
- Excellent communication skills
- Excellent data analysis and problem solving skills
- Proficient in MS Office and the internet
- Willing to work on shifting schedules, including graveyard shifts.
- Must have a valid US Visa.

As these are URGENT position vacancies, qualified applicants are requested to come with their resumés on Monday , January 6, 2003 at 2 pm or January 7, 2003 at 9 am at the 23rd Flr, Robinsons Summit Bldg, Ayala Ave., Makati. Please look for Hazel Barrios.

APPLICATIONS WITHOUT THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS AND JOB CODES WILL NOT BE ENTERTAINED.

Highly competitive compensation package and training await those who will be accepted.
Visit http://www.sykes.com for more information about the Company.
We are not a recruitment agency.

IT Crossings, a subsidiary of a U.S. based insurance software company has exciting, ground floor opportunities for the right individuals.

We are looking to fill the following positions in our new Manila offices:

Programmer / Analyst

Requirements include a Bachelors degree in Computer Science or related field. 1-2 yrs. experience preferred but not required. Proficiency in Cobol a must. Knowledge of Java, Perl or CICS along with an insurance background is a plus.

Senior Technical Consultant

Bachelors degree in Computer Science or related field along with 8+ years experience required with proven proficiency in Cobol. A background in the life insurance industry is preferred. Experience in the software package The Administrator is a plus. Experience in Java, Perl, or CICS is desired. Must be capable of mentoring junior level programmers.

Insurance Business Analyst

Qualified individuals should possess a college degree in addition to 5+ years in the insurance industry. Desired experience in the following areas: Actuaria, Policy Serving, New Business, or Model Office testing. Experience in the software package The Administrator is desirable.

All Positions Require Excellent Verbal and Written English Skills.

To apply, fax resumé to +1 630 960 0717
or e-mail to resume@lidp.com
Please indicate position of interest on resumé.

CENTURY PARK HOTEL

Is in need of

SOUS CHEF

- ✔ Seven (7) years experience at least three (3) years in similar position
- ✔ Cost oriented
- ✔ Ability to handle personnel is a must
- ✔ With strong leadership
- ✔ Personable and neat
- ✔ Must be very creative and quality minded
- ✔ Not more than 40 years old
- ✔ Must have finished at least two (2) years of college education
- ✔ Flexible
- ✔ Ability to train and develop subordinate
- ✔ Expert in a la carte cuisine

GUEST SERVICE MANAGER – JAPANESE

- ✔ College graduate
- ✔ Between 25 to 35 years old
- ✔ Verbal and written facility in Japanese language is a must, Korean speaking as well is an advantage
- ✔ Knowledgeable in Japanese culture
- ✔ Personable, charming, neat and organized
- ✔ Minimum of two (2) years experience in any related field.

QUALIFIED CANDIDATES ARE INVITED TO SUBMIT THEIR RESUMÉ WITH A RECENT 2X2 COLORED PHOTO AND CERTIFICATES IF ANY, AT:

CENTURY PARK HOTEL
599 Pablo Ocampo Street, Malate, Manila 1004
or
P.O. BOX 117, CPO 1099, MANILA
or information@centurypark.com.ph

BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB

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We require applicants who more than meet the requirements we outline below:

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

(Manila Based)

- Graduate of a 4 year course, preferably Tourism, HRM or Marketing from a reputable institution
- Proficient in both oral & written communication
- Personable, confident and assertive
- Must possess strong organizational and planning skills
- With strong drive to meet and develop new accounts while maintaining relationships with existing clients.
- Hardworking, patient, a fast learner and can work well under pressure
- Computer literate
- At least one year working experience in the same industry preferred, but not necessary
- Preferably between 21-25 years of age

Written application with comprehensive resumé & passport size photo should be mailed to one of the following addresses *not later than 10 January 2003*

The Personnel Department
Baguio Country Club Corp.
Country Club Road, Baguio City
(074) 4425060 to 68

or to our Manila Office located at:

7/F Ramon Magsaysay Center
Roxas Boulevard, Malate, Manila
4008388 to 89

Global Cable TV

Watch the World

Broadcast and Community News Dept. needs the following:

Field Reporters and Production Assistants (code: 702)

We are also in need of the following for personnel:

Advertising Account Executives (code: 502)
Marketing Assistant Manager (code: 402)
Customer Service Assistant (code: 604)
Head-End Operator (code: 605)

Must be a college graduate, hardworking, willing to start immediately. Applicants for code 605 must be licensed ECE. Indicate job code in application.

Assistant Head Engineer (code: 302)

Experienced in CATV Fiber Optic System, at least 5 years experience in Multi-Operation System or Medium Scale CATV Network.

Please send your comprehensive resumé until January 15 to:

THE PROGRAMMING DEPARTMENT
The Global Cable TV, Inc.
Gen. Mascardo corner M. Reyes, Bangkal,
Makati City

JOBMARKET

Read it every Sunday with the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS BUT ONCE.

IMMEDIATE HIRING

PURCHASING CLERK

- ✔ College graduate
- ✔ Male, not more than 30 years old
- ✔ With extensive background in purchasing and general services
- ✔ With at least 2 years experience
- ✔ Responsible, trustworthy, can work with minimum supervision
- ✔ Computer literate

TELEPHONE OPERATOR / CANVASSER

- ✔ College graduate from a reputable school
- ✔ Single
- ✔ Female, not more than 30 years old
- ✔ Good communication skills
- ✔ With at least 2-3 years of experience in switchboard operations
- ✔ With pleasing personality and pleasant voice

Qualified applicants may send their application letter, comprehensive resumé indicating telephone/cell phone nos., recently taken 2 x 2 ID pictures, photocopy of transcript of records and other credentials to:

Box KA-014-02 CS
c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer
Classified Ads Division
G/F Trinity Bldg., #636 T.M. Kalaw St.
Ermita, Manila
E-mail: jm1@inquirer.com.ph
Subject: CS

Downgraded

By Depressed

WORKING OOPS!

ONE time, we attended a seminar about government service. After the discussion came the open forum wherein employees were given the chance to ask questions on what have been discussed. One topic of the seminar was about the upgrading of employees. One employee, who could not help but question the "bad system" of the government, asked if a computer operator is allowed to perform the duties of a driver.

The resource speaker answered, "No, he is supposed to handle computers, not vehicles. That is illegal." There was a buzz inside the room. Everyone knew who the employee was referring to. The son of the human resources head, who is a well-paid computer operator, often serves as her personal driver during seminars and official purposes.

A few good men

By Observer

THOUGH I sometimes regret it, I also enjoy working at the legislative department of our municipality. Besides broadening my knowledge on lawmaking and the legislature, it also provides wacky and humorous sidelights. Having been assigned to attend our regular sessions, I have been able to observe and see who among the vice mayor and councilors are indeed rendering public service.

One time, a councilor, instead of saying Mr. Chairman, said, Ms Chairman. Of course, we laughed, but not that loudly as it would affect the ongoing session. This same councilor is also not used to speaking in English, often mispronouncing English words.

Other councilors are very passive and just contented with saying a few words like reiterating what was previously said. Some just laugh around during sessions. Some though are very hardworking and make it a point to finish all their committee reports. Based on these observations, there seems to be only a few good men in our legislature.

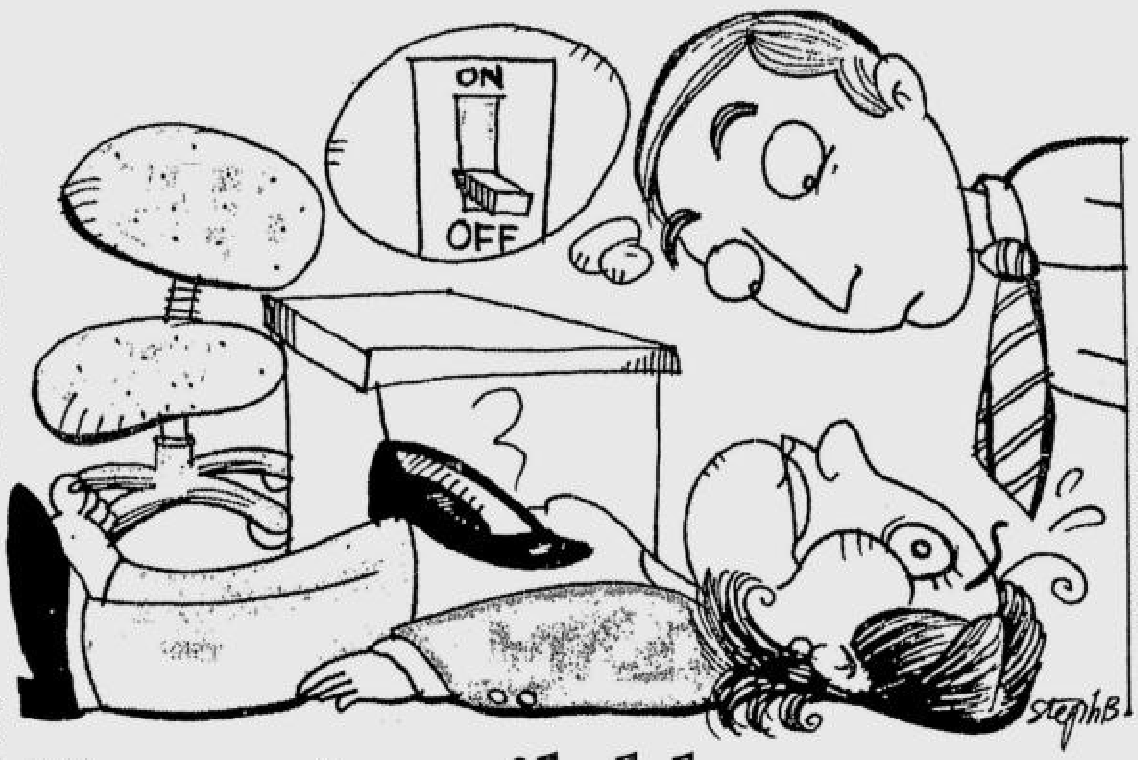

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHANIE BRAVO

No seat available

By Venie

IN MY office, during lunch break, an officemate presented her trade, which were jackets. She insisted that I buy, saying that it is cheaper, of good quality and imported. I was excited to try on the merchandise, and I stood and wore the jacket. But as I was about to sit down, I fell to the floor on my butt! My officemates laughed and I felt so embarrassed because aside from being the only single lady, my office crush also saw the whole incident.

Internet job-hunting dos and donts

By Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D.

HERE are the keys to successfully navigating your next job search on the Internet. Follow these simple Internet job-search rules and you should achieve success in this strategic tool of job-hunting.

Do make job-hunting on the Internet an integral part of your job-search strategy. And do utilize all the job-hunting tools the Net offers beyond job sites.

Don't expect the Internet to be the magic elixir that gets you a new job—perhaps as many as five percent of jobseekers find a job solely through the Internet.

Do be sure to use all possible job sites, including the general job sites, as well as industry-specific sites, geographic-specific sites, and job-seeker-specific sites.

Do take advantage of all the features each job site offers you, including posting your resumé, searching (or browsing) for jobs, and registering for job search agents.

Don't be passive in your job-search. Do post your resumé and apply for jobs, but then don't just sit back—follow-up with each potential employer.

Do consider using online newspaper classified want ads as part of your job search strategy.

Do take advantage of all the resources on the Internet to conduct company research.

Don't spend all your job-hunting time in cyberspace. Integrate your Internet job search into a comprehensive job-search campaign that devotes plenty of time to traditional job-hunting techniques, such as cold-calling, developing a great resumé and especially, networking.

Do pay close attention to each employer's or recruiter's instructions for submitting your resumé in response to a job posting. Should it be e-mailed, e-mailed as an attachment, faxed? What type of resumé?

Do consider using a resumé distribution service. These services "blast" your resumé to thousands of recruiters, headhunters and potential employers—for a fee.

Don't respond to job postings that you aren't qualified for—you're just adding to the clutter employers need to sift through—and you're just wasting your time and the employer's time.

Do consider putting one or more versions of your resumé on the Web, giving employers 24/7 access to your credentials. And do consider developing a Web-based portfolio. Finally, do make sure you submit your Web pages to key search engines.

Do go directly to each employer's website and browse current job openings, review the employer's requirements and apply to each employer directly.

Do know key strategies for sending e-mail cover letters. And do know how to prepare a scannable resumé.

(Reprinted with permission. Copyright by Quintessential Careers. The original article can be found at www.quint careers.com.)

URGENTLY NEEDED!

ELECTRICAL TECHNICIAN

✓ Male, 22-25 years old; graduate of Electrical Technology or any related vocational/technical course.
✓ Must be familiar with switch gear, electrical controls/wiring, motor controls and PLC (Programmable Logic Control).
✓ Good body built. Willing to work long hours.

ALL INTERESTED APPLICANTS MUST APPLY PERSONALLY WITH THEIR RESUMÉ, I.D. PICTURE & T.O.R. TO:

THE CORPORATE RECRUITMENT SECTION
RAMCAR BATTERY GROUP
80-82 Roces Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

* PREVIOUS APPLICANTS NEED NOT APPLY.

Crepes de France, Phils., Inc.
Exclusive License Holder, Master Franchise Company of Crepes de France, Paris in the Philippines Territory

Location: 3rd Floor Rockwell PowerPlant Mall, Makati City (near the cinemas)
Telefax: 898-2577

NOW HIRING !!!

We are looking for people for the following positions:

- Cooks, Kitchen Crew
- Head Waiters / Waiters or Dining Staff
- Beverage / Ice Cream Staff
- Cashiers / Secretary / Purchaser
- Store Supervisor / Manager

PREFERABLY:
- WITH 2 YEARS EXPERIENCE IN THE FOOD BUSINESS
- COLLEGE GRADUATE
- FLUENT IN ENGLISH
- W/GOOD MORAL CHARACTER & PLEASING PERSONALITY

We accept FULL-TIMERS & PART-TIMERS

A progressive expanding packaging/printing company is in need of the following:

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
- With selling experience in Packaging, Printing or similar industry
- Not more than 30 years old; a Business, Marketing or any related graduate course
- Aggressive, highly motivated, results oriented and has a strong desire for excellence
- Must know how to drive

PROOFREADER
- Female, 22 to 28 years old, a graduate of AB English, Mass Communication, Literature or Creative Writing from a reputable school.
- Must possess a very good command of written English & Filipino
- Must have an eye for detail and thorough with her work.
- With pleasing personality and good interpersonal skills.
- Hardworking, willing to render overtime work, and with good positive work attitude.

ROTOGRAVURE PRINTING SUPERVISOR
- Graduate of Industrial or Chemical Engineering is preferred.
- With 3 years experience in Rotogravure Operations as Supervisor in similar setting.
- Not more than 35 years of age, a team player, results-oriented, and with strong leadership.

ROTOGRAVURE OPERATOR/
ASST. ROTOGRAVURE OPERATOR/AND
ROTOGRAVURE HELPER
- Graduate of any Engineering or any technical vocational course is preferred
- Hardworking, highly motivated, results-oriented, and has a strong desire for quality excellence, experience is an advantage.

SLITTER REWINDER OPERATOR
- Graduate of any Engineering, Mechanical/Electrical or any vocational technical course is preferred.
- With at least 2 to 4 years experience ass Slitter Rewinder Operator.
- Hardworking, highly motivated, results-oriented, and has a strong desire for quality excellence, experience is an advantage.

ASST. TECHNICAL HEAD
- Graduate of Engineering or any vocational technical course preferably in Electrical or Electronics.
- At least 1 years experience in trouble shooting electrical/electronic control devices.
- Hardworking, highly motivated, results-oriented, and has a strong desire for quality excellence, experience is an advantage.

COLOR MATCHING TECHNICIAN
- Graduate of BS in Chemistry or Chemical Engineering
- Minimum experience on ink formulation is an advantage.
- Hardworking, highly motivated, results-oriented, and has a strong desire for quality excellence, experience is an advantage.

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- Graduate of any engineering or any vocational technical course.
- Hardworking, highly motivated, results-oriented, and has a strong desire for quality excellence, experience is an advantage.

We offer negotiable individual compensation tailored according to the qualification and experience of the successful candidate, attractive and rewarding benefits package.

Interested applicants are requested to send their resume to: .
C/O Philippine Daily Inquirer
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G/F, Trinity Bldg., 636 T.M. Kalaw St.
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Thermal Solutions, Inc. engaged in Industrial Air-conditioning and Refrigeration Trading & Services is in need of:

BOOKKEEPER (for immediate hiring)
- must be an Accounting graduate
- 2-3 years experience
- possesses good working attitude and highly motivated

Please submit your resumé together with your Transcript of Records and any other information you may feel is useful. Please send application with 2x2 ID picture in sealed envelope and address to the General Manager.

Other requirements:
For manpower pooling only.
- A/C Technician, male (5 years & above experience)
- Sales Engineer, Male/Female (fresh graduate of Mechanical Engineering)

Thermal Solutions, Inc.
1006 Page 1 Bldg. 1215 Acacia Ave.
Madrigal Business Park, Ayala Alabang
Muntinlupa City

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Submit your resumé or bio-data with a recent 2x2 colored photo personally at:

8/F Pearlbank Center, 146 Valero St.
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- Works well independently as well as in a team.

Qualified candidates will be provided with the relevant training and mentoring program and will be offered an attractive compensation package.

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You will lead, coach and motivate an elite team of Financial Advisors. You will supervise and monitor your team to ensure that they perform their roles and duties well, and meet their targets while maintaining high quality service standards.

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- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Strong leadership skills
- Goal and people-oriented

Qualified candidates will be provided with leadership training and necessary management tools and will be offered an attractive compensation package.

Please submit your resumé by January 10, 2003. Applicants should include a cover letter, current and expected compensation package, telephone number and a recent passport-size photograph to:

NMG Financial Services Consulting
25th Floor PhilamLife Tower, 8767 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City
or e-mail: JobcodeFA@NMG-Group.com - (for job code FA)
JobcodeSM@NMG-Group.com - (for job code SM)

or at

P.O. Box MK - 110
c/o PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Ground Floor, Atrium of Makati Bldg.
Makati Avenue, Makati City

Please indicate the job code on the left-hand corner of the envelope. For e-mail applications, please indicate the job code in the Subject Title.

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- Customer service oriented
- Willing to work night shifts

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- **HR Manager** - minimum 1 year prior supervisory experience, preferably in contact center operations
- **Customer Service Agents**
- We are also looking for an **Operations Data Center Manager** who will manage a 24x7x365 data center providing monitoring and operations services for company internal services, core infrastructure, managed services, and customer monitoring services in a high performance SLA environment.

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2/F BPI Buendia Center
Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue (corner Makati Ave.)
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Or e-mail to: CCAHR@capcrossing.com

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- **Computer literate, with excellent typing speed**
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- **With good written and oral communication skills**
- **Preferably with related experience**

Qualified applicants may submit their resumé, 2x2 picture, and other credentials to:

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28F Robinson Summit Bldg.,
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Alabang, Muntinlupa

The Little Gym Makati
Level 1, HatchAsia GlobalCity Ctr
31st St. cor.2nd Ave., E-Square
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If you're the one we're looking for, please send your application letter, resumé & passport-sized photo BY MAIL to any of our branches before January 20, 2003. In your letter, please indicate the POSITION for which you are applying.

Only the most qualified will be called in for interviews. Applications in person will not be entertained at this time.

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- knowledge in Photoshop and Pagemaker is an advantage
- willing to be assigned to different shifts
- experience with recorders and transcribers preferred

Qualified applicants may submit their resumé, 2 x 2 picture, and other credentials to (please indicate current salary):

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12th Floor Net One Center
26th Street corner 3rd Avenue, Crescent Park West
Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila

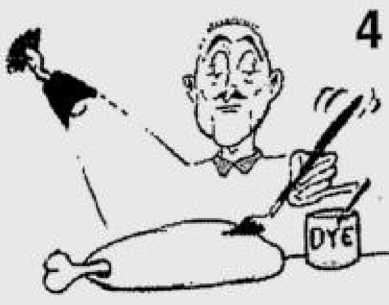
Petty theft leads to big-time thievery

By Teresa Reyes Tunay
Illustrations by Rolando Reyes

1 One of the most common crimes we Filipinos can be guilty of is petty theft. It's such a shame to admit but it does seem to pervade all levels of our society, from the market vendor to the office worker. Let's start at our local *palengke*.

2 We have heard, of course, of "heavy-weight champions," vendors who cheat with weights, whether it's meat, rice or *daing* they're selling.

3 There is the "Market Magician," too, who shortchanges you but you don't get to discover his trick until it's too late. And then you wonder, "How could he have done this? I saw him count the correct change."



4 "Makeup Artists" abound, too—they brush their meats with red dye and use red light bulbs to enhance the color to make the meat look really fresh. In your kitchen light, the truth comes out: the meat is not only old, it's even dry.

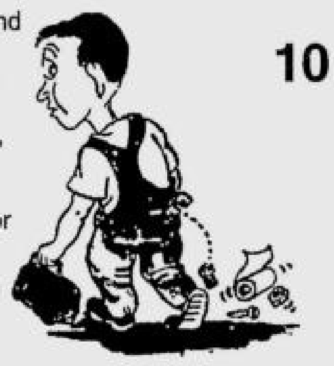
5 "Mix and Match Artists" are common too—experts at mixing in rotten fruits or vegetables along with good ones. You don't notice until you're home unpacking your bags that two of the 10 tomatoes are rotten, or that the oranges you handpicked and paid a lot for are mixéd with inferior ones.

6 Cheating such as in those instances mentioned is, in fact, stealing. When we do not deliver the goods as the customer expects us to, we are being thieves, stealing what others rightfully own. In workplaces, this theft may take other forms. Look around and see if you recognize these people.

7 The "Paper Maniac"—she's the one who must bring home any and all kinds of paper she can get her hands on, whether it's for her children's school projects or for her own perverse satisfaction: bond paper, ruled paper, colored paper, carbon paper, toilet paper, etc.

8 The Paper Maniac is related to the "Miscellaneous Maniacs" who steal other small office supplies: paper clips, rubber bands, fasteners, thumb tacks, cellophane tape, erasers, etc.

9 Petty thieves may be found in other workplaces pocketing little things like screws, nuts and bolts, copper wire, plastic bags, wads of paper towel, almost anything small enough to hide in a bag or a pocket that "Junior can use in school."



10 Nowadays, even sales clerks at malls have succumbed to the lure of small-time thievery: not a few have been caught pickpocketing a bottle of nail polish, a tube of lipstick, a comb—anything small that can be passed off as "personal effects."

11 People who engage in petty theft reason out that what they steal is so small it hardly makes a difference. Of course, they are wrong! Not only does our theft make a difference at our workplaces in terms of diminished profits—it also erodes something very important in our being: our conscience.

12 Petty theft—done repeatedly over time—leads to big-time thievery. A small drop of water won't break a rock but small drops of water falling upon the same spot on the rock, one after the other through the years, can.

13 To illustrate what "small things" can do, allow us to give this example: At St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican, is a marble statue of St. Peter. If you come closer, you'll note that the feet are not the same: one of them has practically lost its toes. No one chiseled St. Peter's toes away—they were practically rubbed off by pilgrims through the centuries, pilgrims who only have their hands and handkerchiefs and maybe tears to "melt" marble.

14 The act of stealing small things repeatedly through the years erodes our conscience until we "graduate" to bigger things. Why wait until that happens? Theft is theft; let's keep our hands clean.

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- Must have a good established network of clients

Sales Associates / Telemarketers

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Graphic Artists

- Graduate of Fine Arts / Advertising
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- Graduate of Accounting, Finance, or similar Business courses *and/or* experience in the banking or finance or banking industry. Applicant must possess at least one of the aforementioned.
- Fluent in English, good business writing and course skills
- Proficient in MS Office and the internet
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Willing to work on shifting schedules, including graveyard shifts

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- Preferably a graduate of Finance, Statistics, or Industrial Engineering
- At least six months to 1.5 years relevant quality assurance experience, a requirement
- Excellent communication skills
- Excellent Data data analysis and problem solving skills
- Proficient in MS Office and the internet
- Willing to work on shifting schedules, including graveyard shifts.

As these are URGENT position vacancies, qualified applicants are requested to email their resumes in plain text to CSR_MF1@yahoo.com or CSR_MF2@yahoo.com . Testing will be scheduled on January 3-4, 2003.
APPLICATIONS WITHOUT THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS AND JOB CODES IN THE SUBJECT HEADING WILL NOT BE ENTERTAINED.
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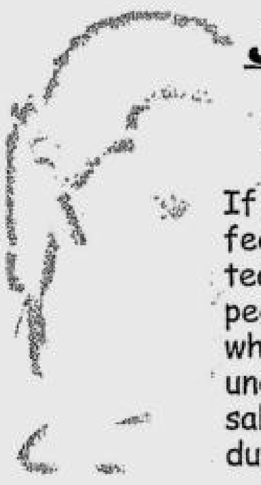

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- Willing to work in different shifts and long hours if necessary
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- Minimum of 1 1/2 years of experience in the fast-food industry, managerial level
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As these are **URGENT** requirements, all interested applicants are requested to personally submit their updated CV's from **Monday to Friday, 8:00AM-5:00PM** to our HRD.

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E-mail: hrd@man.ph.sykes.com;Website: http://www.sykes.com

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The Position: **SENIOR PROGRAM OFFICERS (4)**
(to be based in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao)
The Task: Attends to project monitoring and identification of needs, gaps and best practices in project development and partnership building. Identifies/validates technical assistance needs and requirements. Ensures provision of technical support either through direct service or subcontracting and assesses the quality of such services. Reports to the Regional Coordinator/Information Management &Technical Support Coordinator.
Qualifications: College degree in Social Sciences, Economics or related field; preferably with Master's units. At least 3 years experience as Program Officer, with expertise in any or all of the following: Community Organizing, Institution Building, Micro-Enterprise Development, and Micro-finance. At least 1 year supervisory experience. With good negotiating and facilitating skills; good verbal and written communication skills; can relate well with all levels of staff and Partners.

The Position: **PROGRAM OFFICERS (3)**
(to be based in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao)
The Task: Provides support to project proposal generation and screening including various tasks involved in project proposal processing from approval to release of funds. This includes maintaining communication/follow-up, documentation (information and data access and input into Foundation formats, storage and retrieval), monitoring of compliance to agreements as well as schedules of report/document submission, loan collection and other related tasks. Reports to the Regional Coordinator.
Qualifications: College degree, preferably with Master's units, at least 1 year experience in any of the following areas: Small Business / Enterprise Management; Institution Building, Community Organizing, Environmental Management. Good verbal and written communication skills; good negotiating / facilitating skills.

The Position: **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER (1)**
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Qualifications: College degree in Mass Communication, Communication Arts, Development Communication or other related courses. At least 1 year of working experience in media, copy writing, website management, PR writing, journalism, or any related field. Computer literate and must have exceptional writing and communication skills.

The Position: **PROGRAM ASSISTANT (1)**
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Sunday PEOPLE at WORK
Contributing Editor Regina Galang Reyes

When the going gets rough, the goal is near

By Regina Galang Reyes

MARKETING BRAND 'YOU'

I RESIGNED two years ago to go into business. However, I closed it because it was losing money. I want to go back to fulltime employment but am finding it hard to get back to the corporate world. How can I market myself?

Discouraged Entrepreneur

Yes, the job market is tough, cruel even, especially to those who choose to leave the traditional work world. Unfortunately, many recruitment staff are wary of hiring people who have been out of the corporate world for some time especially if they had been unsuccessful in their business endeavors. They think that you have already lost your tolerance and discipline for the grinding pressures of everyday employment. And to a certain extent, their perception is right.

When you resign from employment and go on your own, you taste the sweet life of being your own boss, like having full control over your time and decisions. You do not need to kowtow to a superior, except perhaps your customers. You have no one looking over your shoulder. These "perks" are deceptive though because unless you have the discipline and guts to run your business, these can be temptations to let things slide and you end up with a failed venture.

Focus on strengths

So how do you market yourself to prospective employers now? First, review your work history. Make a list of all the knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes, values and habits that you've picked up in the course of your work. Include your brief stint in putting up a business. Even in negative experiences, there are valuable lessons to be learned, slivers of gold that can be seen among the rocks. Now, armed with all these positives, focus your application letter and resumé on your pluses. I am sure, dazzled by all the strengths you've gathered, the recruitment personnel's attention may not focus too much on your unsuccessful endeavors.

In presenting yourself, try also to be as humble as possible. You've been out of the harness for some time and you may have developed a little "attitude" along the way, since you've been your own boss for a short time. Make sure that you lose this attitude when you start pounding the pavement to look for a corporate job. When you get back in harness, it would be foolish to chaff at the bit, so to speak. The buzzwords in the corporate world today are teamwork and commitment. If you project that you are not a team player or ready to commit to the company's goals, recruitment personnel definitely won't hire you.

Rethink decision

But let's backtrack a bit to your decision to go back to corporate work. Are you sure you really want to turn your back on your business? What were your reasons for leaving your job in the first place? Perhaps these reasons are still valid for you.

I left the corporate world three years ago to pursue my present career as a writer, editor, media person and entrepreneur. There were many times that I've been tempted to just give up and go back to a cushy, high-paying executive job in a company. But I've always borne in mind the reasons I left the corporate world in the first place—I wanted to have more time for my family, boost my health by avoiding the polluted daily two-hour commute and build better relationships with my loved ones. And so, I keep to my chosen path without regrets.

To give you a proper perspective on your situation, let me share this story of a swimmer who wanted to swim the channel to the California coast. She swam for 15 hours in thick fog and cold waters and then gave up to find out she was only one-half mile from her goal. The lesson here is oftentimes, when the going is really rough, the goal is very near. So, try reassessing what happened to your venture, what were your mistakes and what areas could perhaps be improved that might give your venture a second life. There is an immense satisfaction from knowing that you did not give up so easily. And if, after going through this process, you still decide to go back to the corporate world, you can then be sure that you won't have regrets. Here's to a better beginning and a happier ending for the new year!

(For advice on job hunting, email rreyes@inquirer. com.ph *or tune in to 66.6 on your AM station for "People at Work sa DZRH" hosted by the author, Reggie Reyes, former DOLE secretary Atty. Benny Laguesma and broadcasters Ruth Abao Espinosa and Andy Verde.)*

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ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHANIE BRAVO

The Herods among us

By Teresa R. Tunay

DOESN'T King Herod remind you of some superiors at the workplace? They get so attached to their power and position that they want to "behead" anyone perceived as a threat to their security.

They see themselves as virtual kings around whom everybody is a dumb commoner. Nobody can reason out with them, and talented newcomers in their staff can't grow because they would always decimate the efforts of anyone who might outdo or outshine them. We even have an expression referring to them: "*Akala mo kung sinong Herodes!*"

Oddly, this Herod incident should console us. See, our workplace situation isn't that unique or new, after all. The circumstances may differ through the ages but the case of someone on top getting scared of being "dethroned" is as old as infanticide. And if we do not want to someday become that dreaded "*Herodes*" in our places of work, it would do us well now to understand the root of attachment to power.

Power can intoxicate one to the point of Godlessness. Drunk with power, Herod would not recognize the True King. What can we, ordinary workers in the Year 2003, pick up from the story of this murderer of infants?

For as long as in imitating Jesus we constantly acknowledge God as our King and source of our power, we will see ourselves clearly as we are, and our actions and decisions will be guided by justice, humility and compassion.

(E-mail the author at avemaria@csi.com.ph.*)*

REFLECTIONS FOR THE WORKING SOUL

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Gospel for Jan. 5, 2003 – Mt. 2: 1-12

Where is the newborn king of the Jews?... When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled...They were overjoyed at seeing the star...and did him homage and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

The 'star' in our work

By Bishop Precioso D. Cantillas, SDB, DD

MOST of us need inspiration in our work. Like the Three Kings who were stimulated by the bright star and traveled far in order to find the newborn king, we need to be motivated by a "star" which will help us carry on with the burden of work.

What drives us to work hard? Some work very hard in order to attain personal ambitions like becoming millionaires at the age of 30, for example, while a good number work hard just in order to meet the bare necessities of life. While all of us need to work in order to live, most people have the welfare of their families as the brighter star moving them to hard work. Parents usually offer the sacrifice of work so that their children may grow and mature in relative ease and comfort. Seeing their children freed from the hardships they themselves had endured and watching them reach success in life give them great joy and satisfaction.

The greatest joy and satisfaction is for us to enjoy when we discover the presence of the newborn king in our lives and offer our very own work as our homage to this King of Kings. When we apply all our talents in the job, work in humble obedience to our duty and in good faith bear all the sufferings that our work entails, we offer to the Lord "gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." Our very work itself becomes the brightest star which sustains us in our search for the Lord!

(E-mail the author at mfvg@skyinet.net.*)*

When the boss won't listen to your ideas

WORKING WOUNDED

Bob Rosner

DEAR WW: I just spent months working on a proposal. My boss took one look at it and shot it down. And this isn't the first time she's done that. She has a habit of rejecting things outright. How can I get her to give me a chance?

Can't Get to First Base

Image this scene: there's an old-fashioned TV set, black and white, its picture a little grainy. On the screen a young man, scrubbed and eager, is about to enter his boss's office. "He's gonna love it, Ginger, wait and see!" the young man bubbles. Then, he winks at the secretary and strides purposefully into the office. Moments later he reemerges, crestfallen and shaky. Now the camera pans back, revealing another man, invisible to Bud and Ginger. "Meet Bud," the man intones. "This morning he was full of initiative and good ideas; now he doesn't know what hit him. What Bud doesn't know is that he's just entered. . . the Twilight Zone 9-5."

You know the "Twilight Zone 9-5:" it's that place where you and your boss seem to exist in parallel universes. Where no matter what you do, you just can't seem to get in sync. Too many forays into the T. Zone and you start wishing you could change the channel.

Well, this time, before you reach for the knob, try taking an alternative view of the situation. In a book called "Intrapreneuring" (Harper Row, 1985), Gifford Pinchot offers some great tips on what to do when your boss doesn't listen to your ideas. I've adapted these questions from his suggestions.

Do you know why your idea is being rejected? Feeling frustrated is the normal way that most of us react to rejection. But right now you need to keep the lid on your feelings and instead engage your boss in a constructive critique of your proposal. Remember, this is not a debating class where you'll score for every point you make; this is feedback where you take notes and try to hear the points your boss is making. The more information you get, the better your chance of bringing your project back to life.

Could you do a better job of presenting your ideas? I once saw a great project get shot down because of an inappropriate joke made during its introduction to executive management. Only after apologies were made and rings kissed was the project resuscitated. It's remarkable how many great projects get squandered for reasons totally removed from their merits. So ask your boss and other knowledgeable players: "Ideas, aside, how could I have strengthened my position?"

Can you build popular support for the idea? Mention the idea to others in your department who are likely to support it, and ask them to suggest something similar to your boss. Perhaps with a groundswell of support, his feelings will change. (A word of warning, though: tread carefully so you don't appear to be working behind your boss's back!)

Should you find a new sponsor? If your boss doesn't listen, maybe someone else will. Ask yourself: will another department gain if this idea is implemented? Then, approach the head of that department. Again, this isn't for the politically faint-hearted; you're potentially treading on your boss' toes. But if you're determined, a detour may be the most effective route.

Should you give up? Sometimes the world (or those who think they run it) simply isn't ready for a great idea. If you've tried the above and the boss still isn't biting, let it go. Put your energy into doing your job and identifying your next idea. Use what you learned this time to make that one an easier sell.

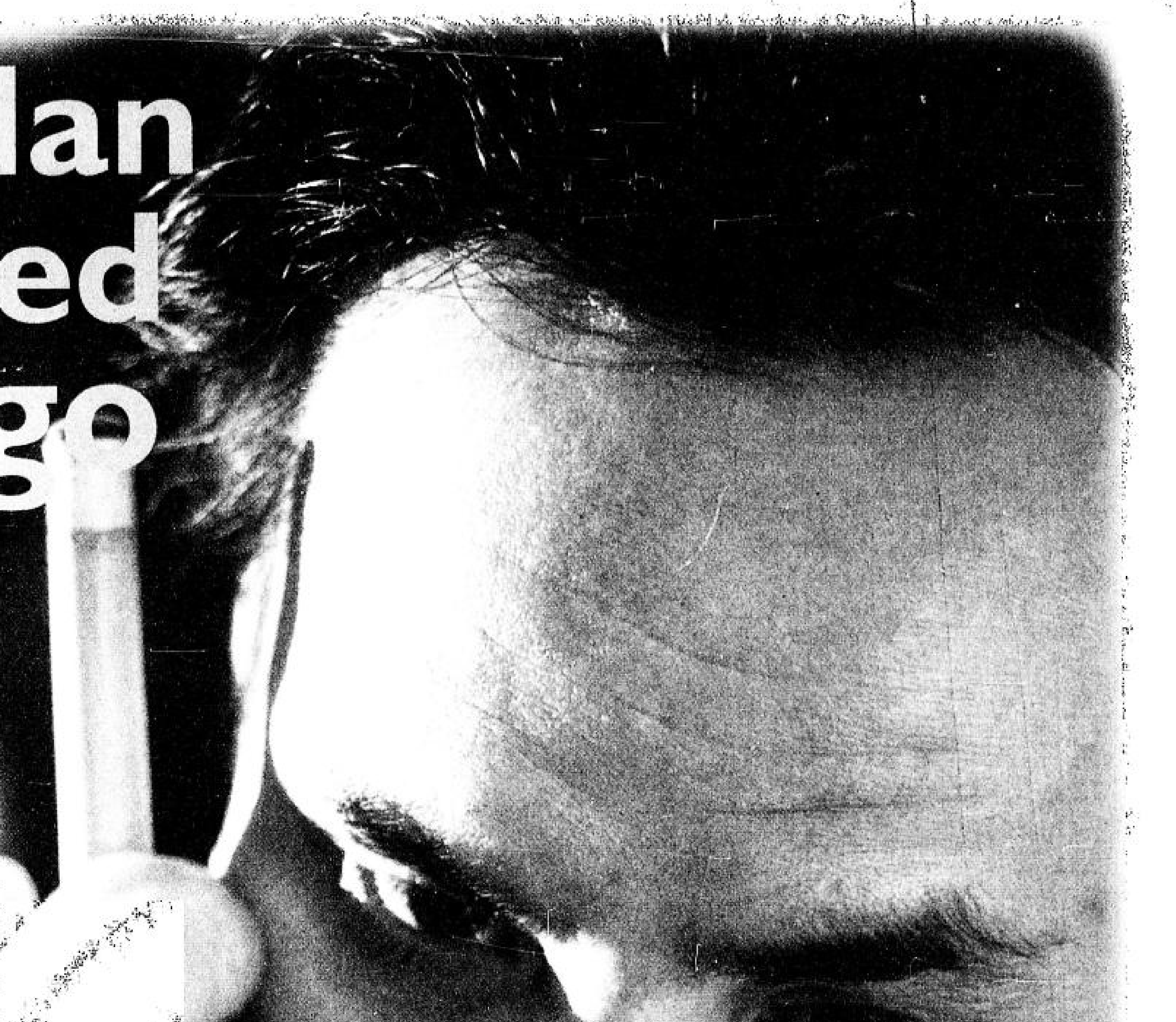
These questions won't derail all future visits to the Twilight Zone, but these will give you some useful tools for navigating once you get there. And if all else fails, remember that old W.C. Fields line: "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again. Then quit. There's no use being a damn fool about it."

(Mr. Rosner is the author of "The Boss's Survival Guide," McGraw Hill 2001, and "Working Wounded," Warner 2000, a speaker and founder of the award-winning Working Wounded.com and Retention Evangelist.com. He is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. E-mail him at bob@workingwounded. com)

ILLUSTRATION BY JED ESTRADA

sunday
INQUIRER
magazine
GET TO KNOW SOME REAL PEOPLE
January 5, 2003

A Man Called Django



By Ruel S. De Vera
Photographs by Mike Alquinto

IT'S in his eyes, steely and unwavering, the look of a hunter after prey. Francisco "Django" Bustamante stalks the pool table, the green rectangle his hunting ground, weapon of choice firmly in hand, ready to strike. It's in his movements around the table: careful but never tentative, pausing now and then to take a puff from a cigarette. If he's across the table from you, then you have a case of good news and bad news. The good: You are facing off against one of the best ever to hold a cue stick. The bad: You're going down next.

Intensely competitive and driven to perfection, Django has always seemed to be a pocketing machine, racking up title after title during this, perhaps the golden era of our country's recent billiard-crazy history. But Cardiff changed all that.

While competing in this year's World Pool Championship in Cardiff, Wales, the nation looked on as Django, clearly hurting from the death of his youngest child a world away, stoically battled Earl Strickland in a tense final pairing. Though he would fall to the American, Django's act of courage touched a nation, and his tears upon his return showed us an entirely new side to the taciturn pool predator.

Yet some things never change. As a new year begins, Django will once again leave his family and travel the world like other professional pool players, match-day mercenaries with sticks slung over their shoulder, journeying to all ends of the earth. As he always has, Django will depart to do battle anew—but he won't forget all that went on this past year.

Embraced by the cool shadows of the Puyat billiards hall in Makati, Django is home among the silent tables and sticks waiting to be used. As he tells his story, it becomes clear, as in the case of modern legends, that the 39-year-old's origins are the stuff of fiction.

Django is the second to the youngest in the prodigious brood of 13 born to Macario Bustamante, who made toilets or worked in the rice fields, and his wife Juana. But the boy would only meet seven living siblings, including the one born after him, effectively making him the *bunso*. Born December 29, 1963, to humble beginnings in microscopic Barrio Maliwalo-Maligaya in Tarlac, Django got his name from his playmates.

The game-time gunslinger owes his name to Italian actor Franco Nero. "Cowboy movies were very popular then," he relates in crisp Filipino. "People looked at me when I would play, me in my sandals. And I hated losing, so I would challenge them to fistfights. People said I was like Django, and the name stuck." He was only 12 when he first felt the call of the cue. "One of my siblings was running a restaurant in the town of Tarlac and it was next to a billiard hall," he recounts. "After school, I'd go to the restaurant, then straight to the hall to play a bit until I found out I liked it." Even in school, the sport was accessible. "There was a billiard hall next to the school, too, and I was there a lot." Django discovered he really, really liked the game and dropped out in his second year of high school to become a real pool player. At the pool hall, he often acted as the spotter—taking out the pocketed balls and racking them up before "spotting" the cue ball—and earned some money from tips. "When I was a spotter, I figured I could make some money from playing. So I played every day." At 16, he was already whipping older opponents in Isabela and Dagupan.

A benefactor named Mr. Bocobo watched a 22-year-old Django and liked what he saw. In 1985, he brought Django to Manila, the epicenter of the game then and now. "If you wanted to improve your game, you had to come to Manila because all the good players were there." Django hung around the big city pool halls, joined in the bets until he began sharing the floor with big-time players, particularly at the old Coronado Lanes in Cubao.

To page 2

His most amazing year as one of the world's best pool players was also his most difficult, but for Django Bustamante, it's all part of the game of life

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These hard-working Pinoy athletes are sweating their way to international aerobic glory

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A Man

...from page 1

It didn't take him long to cross cue sticks with the game's best. In 1988, he faced the venerable Jose "Amang" Parica in the San Miguel Beer 9-Ball World Open finals, a competition peppered with foreign competitors. Django was as confident as ever. "I knew I could beat him," he still maintains. "But I had an appendectomy the week before, and he had a twice-to-beat advantage. I went ahead but then he caught up and beat me 8-9." Django wouldn't lose much after that.

That year, he took up the itinerant life of the traveling pro, flying off to Japan where he continued to win. The next year, he flew to Switzerland and finally landed in Germany. In 1990, Indonesian businessman Yongki Purwita was so impressed by Django's performance in money games that he hired the Filipino as the house pro in his bar called Rick's Café. Located in the small town of Kiel, Germany, it remains Django's primary base outside the Philippines for most of the year, a lair where he faces off against visiting challengers and represents the café in pool leagues.

By 1991, he had joined the ranks of the world's best, downing American Mike Lebron in the Brunswick Open in Munich. The next year, Django continued his ascent by invading the United States. "Back then, I already knew my shot was so good and I was winning so much in Europe that other players began dodging me. I felt like I could beat anybody."

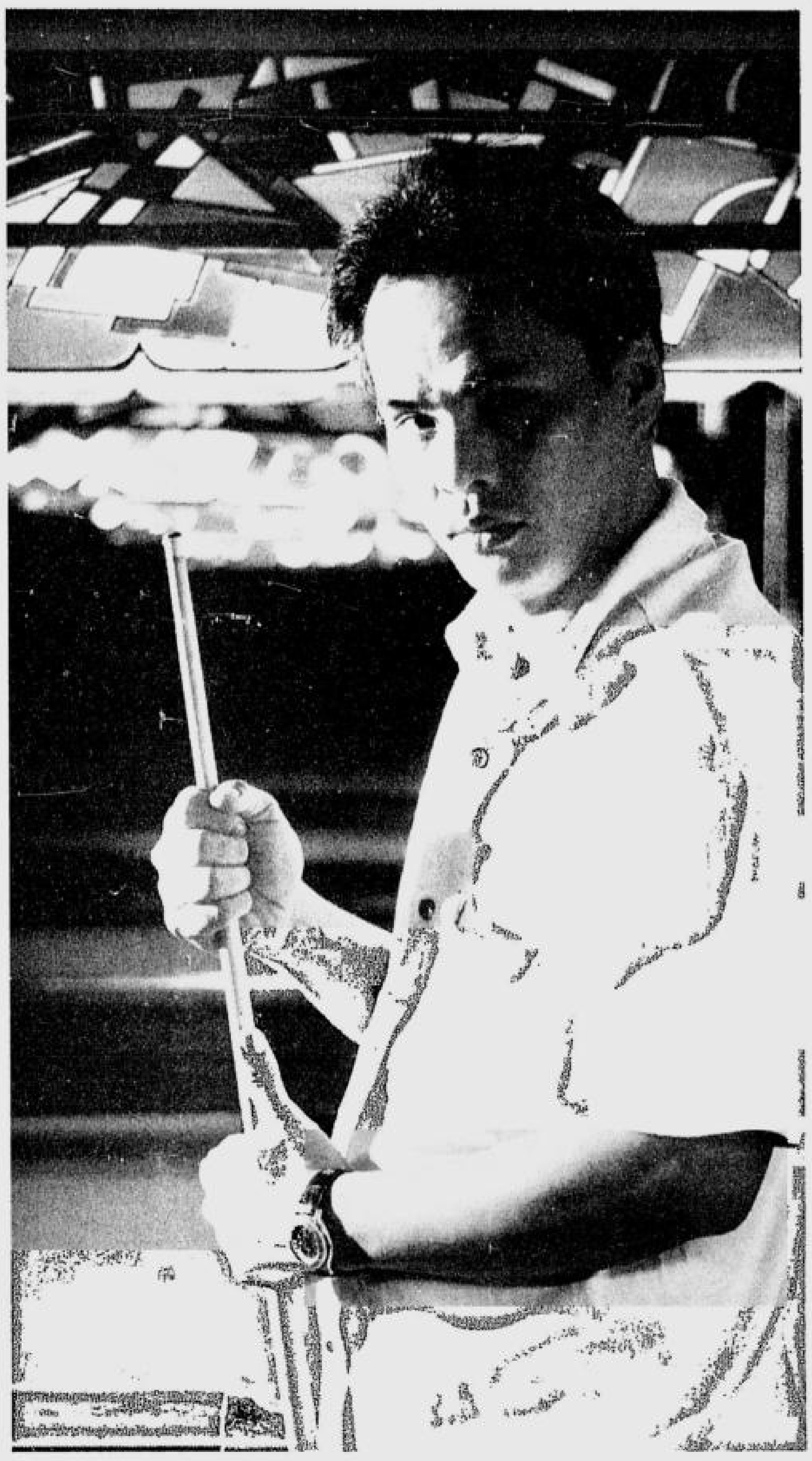
True to form, Django would put together a rack-busting record as he blew away opponent after opponent, winning all over the world. He's won so many times since then that he's lost count, though the 1998 Camel US Player of the Year says he's won "over 200 tournaments in Europe alone." In 1993, he was named to the national team for the first time. These years also featured a rising dominance by Filipino cue artists on the world stage, with Django at the front of the line. Soon, teenagers were hanging from the back of jeepneys with cue stick cases slung over their shoulders throughout the country.

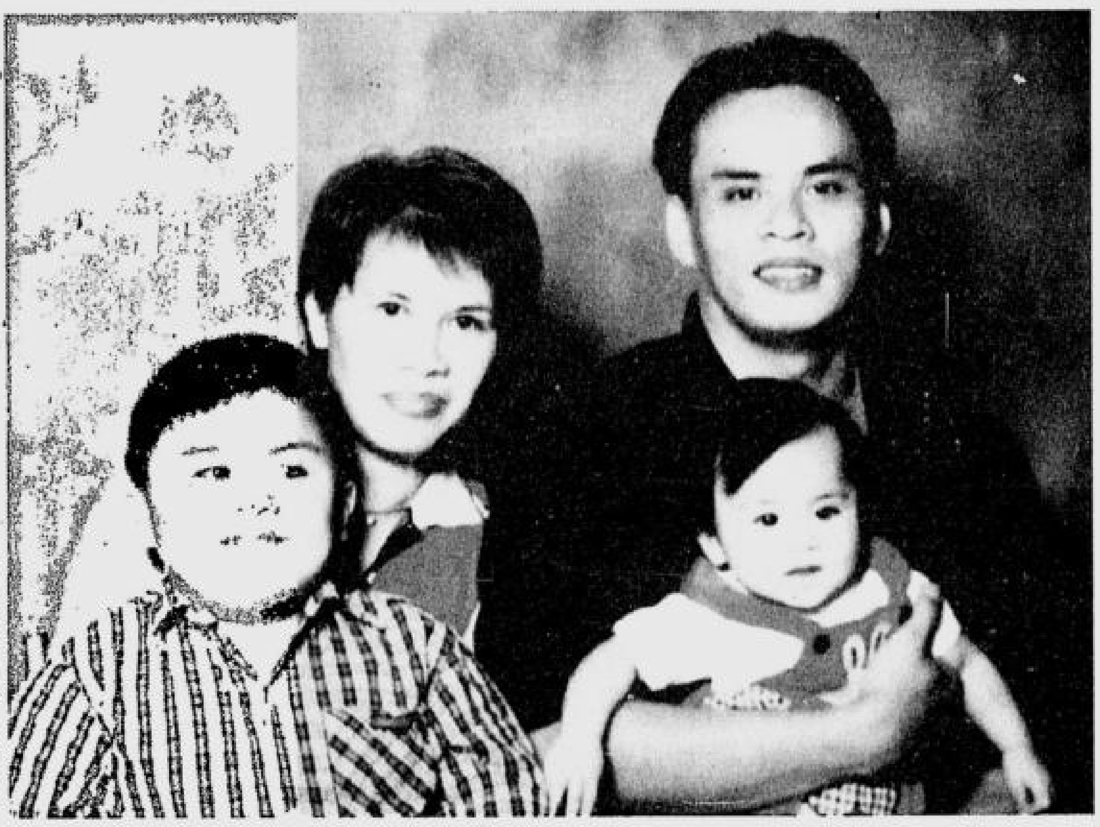
"When I first left the Philippines, there were hardly any tournaments here although billiards has always been popular. But recently, it became really big."

Beyond his focus and titanium-tough nerves, Django possesses one of the ultimate weapons in billiards: the game's best break. Like the Big Bang itself, Django's break sends those colorful spheres of matter careening across the board to their proper places in a stunning combination of precision and power.

"When I'm in a tournament, I really concentrate," Django says of his style. "I don't listen to anything at all when I'm playing. I don't talk to anyone." One of the game's more fit competitors, Django's only past time away from the sport is taking in the occasional cockfight.

Django feels that it's the fact that you can begin playing billiards for very little money and the Filipinos' traditional game of "rotation"—where the number on each pocketed ball is added up until a player beats 60—that has helped make local cue artists the toast of the world. "And I think this isn't a passing thing. We'll be the best for a long time. Even when Efren ("Bata" Reyes) and I fade away, there will be others to take our place."





Before Cardiff: Django with (left to right) Francisco, Jr., Milagros and baby Marielle

Interestingly enough, Django has always played the more serious one between the country's—and indeed the very sport's—best two players. He has always been the grim professional to that sly, smiling rogue Efren "The Magician" Reyes, whom Django considers a friend and mentor in many ways. "Even if I manage to win more tournaments than Efren, he will always be number one because he's my idol," Django smiles. "When we're abroad, it's like he's more than my brother." The two play together often under the aegis of Puyat Sports. Django is quick to praise the Puyat brothers, Jose and Aristeo, who have sponsored him since 1993 without earning a peso from him in exchange for carrying the Puyat Sports logo into battle. "But when Efren and I battle, we know it's all business."

Family has always been important to Django. He has two children, 17-year-old Michael and 13-year-old Gene Rose from two previous relationships. But Django now comes home to Milagros, whom he met in Germany, and their three-year-old son Francisco, Jr. But it was their other child, then eight-month-old Marielle, whom the world would tragically know about.

Last July, Django had flown to Cardiff to take part in the gem among the sport's tournaments, the World Pool Championships. Back home, something went terribly wrong. On July 17, Milagros brought Marielle to the hospital because the baby had a fever. The doctors said the baby was fine. The next day, Milagros brought the baby back because the child looked pale and they soon found that Marielle had a viral blood infection, one that was worse than meningitis. The baby was given a 50-50 chance of survival. Django, who phoned home every day, was shaken by the news and prepared to return home as soon as he could although he was doing well in the tournament, making the top 16.

But the next day, July 19, Marielle succumbed to the infection. At 3 p.m. in Cardiff, Django got the terrible news. "I was stunned. I didn't want to go on with the matches because I wasn't in any condition to play." But Milagros told Django to go on. "I decided to continue playing, dedicating the tournament to my baby." Django felt that Marielle was with him in those waning days in Wales. "Even when I was about to lose, I would still win. It was because of her." An emotional final match had Django ahead of Strickland, but for a crucial scratch, yet Django emerged from the World Championship the fans' favorite if not a titleholder. "That was the most difficult match of my career," he confesses. "It was also my most painful loss ever."

He returned to the country immediately after and straight to the Pasay funeral home where Marielle's wake was being held. It was in front of his baby's tiny casket that Django, known for his emotionless game face, finally broke down. "She was my favorite baby," he recalls. "Marielle was very energetic and liked to laugh and play with me. It was really painful because she was still all right when I left. And then, she was gone."

He almost didn't have any time to mourn because then it was off to another match, this time in the US. "It was hard to leave because of what I had just gone through but what can I do? This is all I do and if I don't go, it'll destroy my career. How will I help my family then?"

Django did receive a boost when he was designated flag-bearer of the Philippine team to the 14th Asian Games in Busan, South Korea. "I was surprised because I really wasn't counting on it. I felt that there were others who were more worthy. But I was really honored," he explains. Django continued his hot streak, winning his first Asiad gold in the billiard doubles together with Antonio Lining. "And it was my first time to take part in the Asian Games." In November, he continued to be dominant, winning the 35th All-Japan Championship in Osaka.

In a game of angles and bounces, the past year was especially crazy. Django says that 2002 was his most successful year ever, as he won seven times. "I'm proud of that but it's painful because the price I had to pay was my baby." The life of a traveling pro continues to be quite a grind. "I spend most of my year in Europe or America and when I come home, it's usually only for a month." But this time, he gets to be with his family as Milagros and Junior will be with him in Germany. "This life is hard because you have to go away, and, if your shot is off, you won't make any money." Yet this nine-ball ninja has no plans to stop his wandering ways after 26 years of pool. "Maybe I'll stop and run a business someday, but right now, this is the only life I know."

Then, as he has done countless times before, Django Bustamante bids farewell and leaves. He has a match in three hours.

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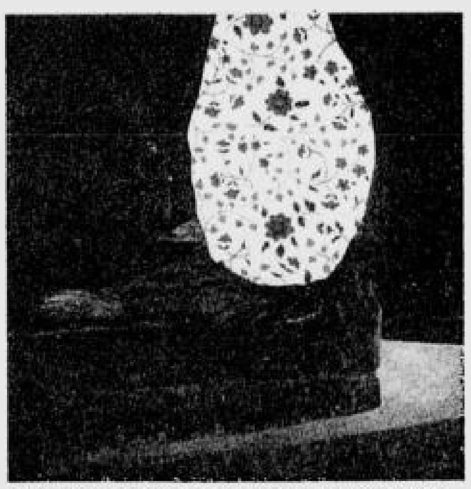

SISON'S INTERIOR DOMAIN "Debbie Watching TV," acrylic on canvas by Yasmin Sison, is part of the exhibit "Interior Domain" at Finale Art Gallery, SM Megamall from Jan. 7-22. The exhibit is a continuation of Sison's series that consists of paintings taken from manipulated images of women in interior settings. *For more of This Week, see page 7.*

Erratum:

In the article "Santi's Last Mambo" (SIM, December 22, 2002) by Elizabeth Lolarga, the following paragraph was mistakenly attributed to the author. It was actually contributed by Santi's friend, actress Gigi Dueñas, who wrote from her home in the West Indies. **SIM** *regrets the error. We are reprinting the paragraph here.*

Indeed, what made me and Santi click was his innovative way as an artist. He would always look for new means of expressing himself and would always share these discoveries with me. As a person, he was always ready to boost my morale and make me laugh even at my darkest moments. I remember when he was almost dying in the hospital after his first stroke. "Have the prices of my paintings gone up yet?" he asked. We said not yet, but maybe if he died?

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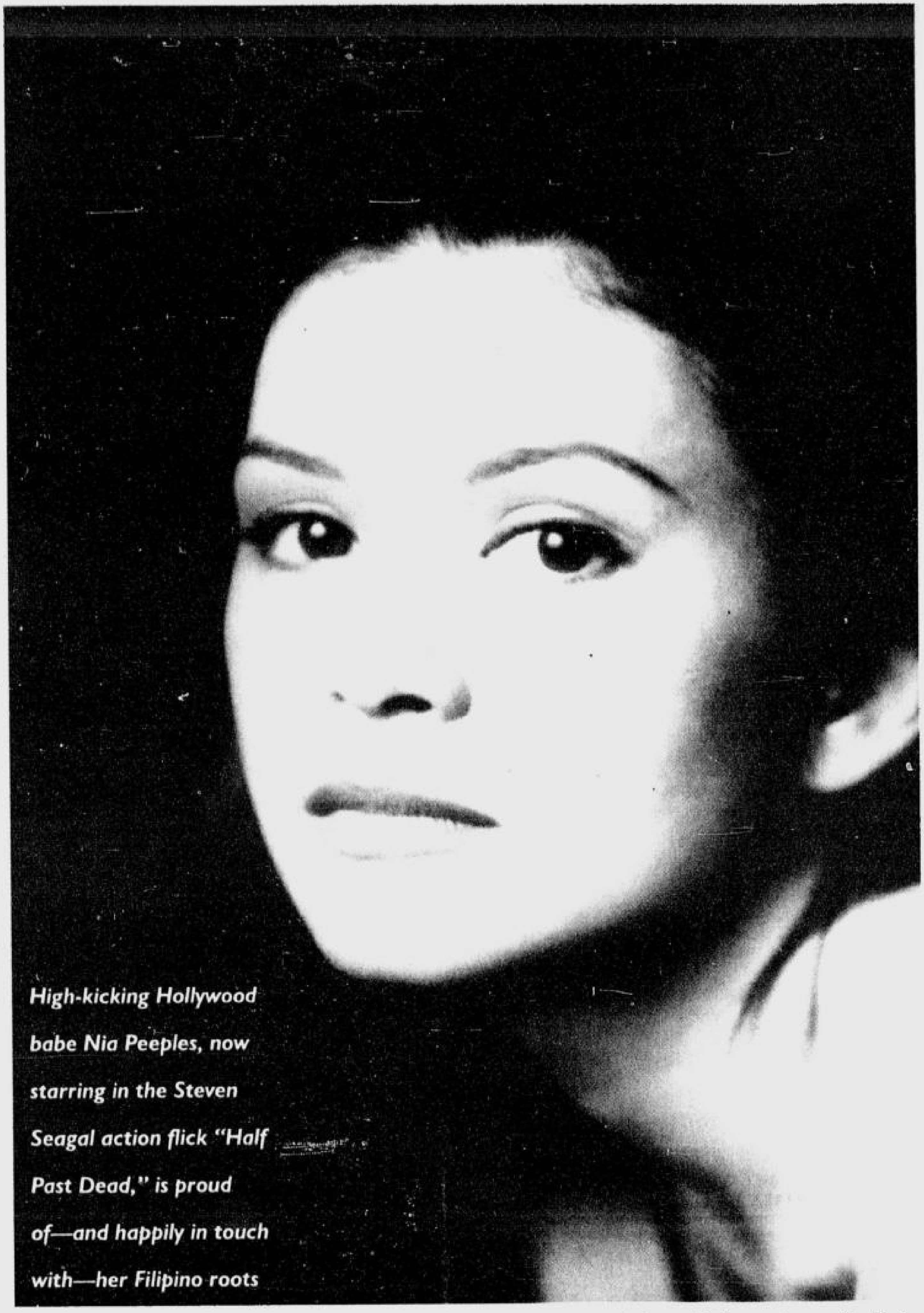
Pinoys Abroad

By Ruben V. Nepales

Color Her Pinay



High-kicking Hollywood babe Nia Peeples, now starring in the Steven Seagal action flick "Half Past Dead," is proud of—and happily in touch with—her Filipino roots

"I WOULD love to go to the Philippines," says Nia Peeples, Hollywood actress, singer, songwriter and choreographer, during a one-on-one interview at a Beverly Hills hotel in which she talks extensively about her Filipino heritage for the first time.

Nia, Steven Seagal's co-star in the action-thriller "Half Past Dead," recalls the time she danced the *tinikling* as a little girl. The multi-talented performer is best known for her roles on two hit TV series, as Nicole Chapman on "Fame" and as an undercover cop on Chuck Norris' "Walker, Texas Ranger." She also scored a Billboard no. 1 dance record and became a host of "The Party Machine with Nia Peeples" and MTV's "Friday Night Street Party."

The way Nia recounts it, her family's beginnings in the US sound like a not-so-typical chapter in an immigrant Filipino family's pursuit of the American dream. "My grandparents on my mother's side are both from the Philippines," begins Nia, whose father, Bob, is white. "My grandfather, Frank Nuñez Rubic, was from Manila. My grandmother, Emilia Salcedo, was from Cebu." Both are deceased.

Although she never learned to speak Filipino, Nia maintains that she's thoroughly Pinay. But her family's saga explains why most migrants eventually lose their heritage. "My grandfather joined the US Navy in the Philippines in 1925 and when they docked over in San Francisco, he jumped ship so he could get his family here," Nia recounts. "My grandmother came over illegally, during the war. So when they had children, they wouldn't allow their kids to speak Tagalog and told them to act like Americans. The kids understood Tagalog but never spoke it."

One of those kids was Nia's mother, Elizabeth "Liz" Joan Rubic Peeples, who, at 61, has never been to the Philippines.

Nia, who was born in Hollywood, narrates an incident that must have been remarkable to three generations of Rubic women. "Years ago, right before my grandmother passed away, I remember going to a party with her. I must have been 13. My mother would take us to my grandparents' homes or their parties, and there were many Filipinos around speaking Tagalog. You'd pick up a few things but you don't really know. Then once, my mother asked my grandmother how her aunt (my grandmother's sister) was. My grandmother said, 'She's not really your aunt.' My mother said, 'What!?' Turns out they weren't really sisters. To escape the war, some of my folks changed names. Some of them who found a way to get to the United States took all of these different children in with them."

She adds, "My mother is really dying to find her roots back there, because we lost contact. There's a lot that we don't know, that we feel like there's a hole." Nia claims that her grandfather Frank was a medal-winning boxer, while his brother Jose was a Manila police chief. "I would love to go to the Philippines, with my mother."

Nia, who was a high school cheerleader, senior class president and homecoming queen, credits her gregariousness to her upbringing. "My entire family is like this," she states. "Maybe it's because we come from so many races. My father is from the south with Scottish, Irish, English, Native Indian, Italian and all that in his blood, and he married a Filipina. That was something, especially in those times. My parents were proud of the fact that they had three little girls of mixed blood. My extended family also had children of every color. So when our family gets together, there are different kinds of food. Individuality is always honored. I never even considered that it wasn't part of being American. It was so weird to me when I got old enough to realize that some people are prejudiced. I didn't even know that I was of a different color, until I moved to Texas when I was 11. I heard them talking about this one black kid in class and I went, 'What?' "

Still, Nia, whose exotic good looks, articulateness and engaging mien make her a standout, is proud of her mixed heritage. "I wouldn't trade it for anything," she says. "It's always odd to me when I hear Americans say to me, 'I'm German and Irish.' I'm like, that's all? How can you be only that when I'm a mixture of different races? But the one race that is the nearest would be Filipino, because it's not so far removed.

"The only Filipino tradition that was handed down to us was the food and the tradition of being a tightly-knit family," admits Nia, whose real name is Virenia, after a slave in "Spartacus." "I think that Filipinos as a whole are very lovely people. And they are great caregivers. I don't know if this is also a Filipino tradition but the women in our family hold the big stick. They rule the house."

The actress, who got her first big break on the soap "General Hospital," says, "At Christmas, or other holidays or whenever my extended family gets together, we always have *pancit*, *adobo* and *lumpia*. I cook *adobo* a lot. Everybody likes it. Of course, with white rice."

Nia adds with a chuckle, "My son eats rice cold out of the refrigerator." Son is Christopher, 13, from a first marriage. Nia has a daughter, Sienna Noelle, 3, with her current husband, Lauro Chartrand, a stunt coordinator who is working on Tom Cruise's 19th century epic, "The Last Samurai."

Nia's martial arts training with Lauro over the years pays off handsomely in her role as 49er Six in the slam-bang crowd-pleaser "Half Past Dead." Nia and Morris Chestnut ("Under Siege 2" and "Boyz N the Hood") lead a band of mercenaries that takes over Alcatraz, the famous prison island off San Francisco, which is imagined in the film as having reopened as a high-tech hellhole. Seagal, an undercover FBI operative posing as a convict, and rapper-actors Ja Rule and Kurupt launch into nonstop action.

Nia is the film's bright spot. The New York Times' Elvis Mitchell wrote, "There is a welcome appearance by Nia Peeples as (Chestnut's) aide-de-carnage, who is so mean and beautifully lean that she seems to live up to the name of her 1986 hit, 'Trouble.'"

"The hardest part of doing this film wasn't really the physical part," Nia clarifies. "It was creating a character who was more than just running around trying to look like a tough chick, because I'm only 5'2". You put me next to Steven Seagal, who's 6'5", and there's no way that people are gonna say, he's scared of her."

When she sat down earlier with a group of writers, Nia was asked, "What is the significance of all that blue make-up around your character's eyes?" She replied appropriately, tongue in cheek, to everyone's delight: "There is no significance. She was just out of her mind. She'd do it because she could." Indeed. Nia's 49er Six calls herself "the queen bitch of the universe" and she whistles to challenge her male adversaries to come out and fight her.

Asked how long it took to rehearse her duel with Ja Rule, an acrobatic combat that is one of the film's action highlights, Nia reveals, "We rehearsed for three hours and that was it. A lot of times, they find it difficult to find a woman to act as my double. When I showed up on the set, they asked, do you fight? Yeah, I can fight, I said. The reaction was like, 'Yeah, right, sure, some actress. I want to see this.'"

Morris Chestnut's assessment of Nia's fighting skills was succinct: "She can kick a lot of ass. She really knows her martial arts."

Is there a lot of "fighting" in the Peeples home (they moved to Vancouver a year ago, but are back in LA for a year because of Lauro's 'The Last Samurai' job)? "All the time! With my 13-year-old and three-year-old. We are all at each other's throats." But between her and her fight coordinator husband? Nia roars with laughter. "In my down time, while he's here working, I go train with him."

So does her son enjoy having a mom who delivers Wushu kicks against tough rapper actors? "Are you kidding?" she answers. "He's like the star of all his teenage friends. I'm a hip and happening mom. I dig it. I'm right there just for a brief moment. It will be over quickly."

But career-wise, has her mixed heritage helped or hindered her? "It has helped me slip into a lot of different types of roles that other people cannot. The bad side is that I cannot play straight ahead white roles, but there are so many people competing for those roles already. I am what I am, and I look the way that I look, and that's that. I'm very proud of every race that I am."

Does she get to hang out with Filipino actors? Nia responds, "You know what's funny? The last pilot for a series I did for ABC was called 'Meet the Changs.' It was supposed to be this mystical thing about a Chinese family, but almost everybody in it is Filipino." She mentions actors like Dante Basco and Rona Figueroa.

"We had a bunch of stunt people who were Filipinos," she continues. "One time we were lying on the floor because we did a scene where we got knocked out, and somebody started going, 'Pssssst!' All the Filipinos in the room turned their heads. We laughed so hard. It became a joke on the set because whenever they wanted to see a reaction out of someone, they went, 'Pssssst!'"

So what's next for her? "Nothing. I'm sitting back and I'm waiting." She laughs again. "I bet you never heard that answer from an actor before."

We are family: Nia is flanked by husband Lauro, her son Christopher (in striped sleeves) and daughter Sienna Noelle. The two kids on opposite sides are Lauro's children from a previous marriage.

Businesswatch

By Cora Llamas

Seeking the Servant Leader

ROGER CARPIO

THE FILIPINO leader. To most cynics these days, the phrase sounds like an oxymoron, an impossible dream at best, or a pompous nightmare set loose on an unsuspecting nation.

Yet, such creatures exist, and they can be drawn out, given enough time, training, and eye-opening education. It may be about time, given the gloom-and-doom scenarios weighing down on every Filipino, that they are seen as the country's only hope.

Thus believes Prof. Federico Macaranas, the Dean of the School of Development Management at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM). Coming into contact with Filipinos from every class, segment, trade, and region, he found one predominant question on their minds. As he phrases it, "There's a crisis of leadership in all sectors—government, education, families, the business sector. Is there a new way of looking at leadership so we can improve on ourselves?"

His answer doesn't yield the name of a Presidential wanna-be. "We can create leaders who have the necessary characteristics based on positive Filipino traits."

Positive traits from a culture that spawned crab mentality, *bahala na* and the *palusot* system? According to the Dean, look a little deeper, and you might be a bit surprised.

Serving as assistant secretary for Foreign Affairs from 1988 to 1993, Macaranas discovered "that other Filipinos abroad were willing to help and share their money, talent, and time" to help the country, then flushed with triumph and hope in the aftermath of Edsa 1, on the way to rebuilding and progress. A UN grant for the implementation of development diplomacy enabled him to survey Filipino sectors and interact with Pinoy communities overseas. "Many wanted to help, but didn't know how."

During his government stint, Macaranas helped give his countrymen creative and productive outlet: the Science and Technology Advisory Councils in Filipino expat communities around the globe, and the Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals (TOKEN) in the Philippines, among others.

The Pinoy collective flame to reach out and help their needy countrymen has not dampened over the years, says Macaranas. They may even have burned brighter in the face of adversity. He rattles off case studies that could give even the more skeptical some pause: "There are Pinoy graduate students teaching Japayukis how to operate computers so they can learn some skills. Award-winning teachers in the US are willing to come back to teach colleagues they have left behind. Other teachers in Hong Kong are now banding together to share their knowledge. You see Pinoy doctors from the US returning to set up clinics. Even now, the number one tourists in the country are *balikbayans*, and the number one dollar remitters are OFWs."

Yet Filipinos wanting to effect change are also present in this country, and it is this well-meaning sector that Macaranas and his latest project, the Center for Servant Leadership Project Philippines (CLSP), want to tap.

Originally founded by Harvard and MIT professor Robert Greenleaf, the CLSP's US-based parent organization resurrects the widely respected—but little practiced—tenet, that a leader is first and foremost a servant who places the interest of his community (country, barangay, corporation) before his own or his family's and friends'. What gives the Center its distinctive edge is its vital list of characteristics that make possible or help develop a servant-leader. These include the abilities "to listen; empathize; heal broken spirits; become aware of, and sensitive to, issues; persuade; contextualize; have foresight; serve; commit to the growth of people, and to help build the community."

The US Greenleaf Center has already built branches in Australia, Canada, Netherlands, Korea, Singapore, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. Macaranas and other like-minded colleagues will launch its Philippine beachhead on January 8. In the planning stages are seminars and workshops aimed to reach the youth, barangays, local and national political leaders, business community, media, and religious sectors. The First International Conference will be held on November this year, bringing in top speakers from the international community.

The timing couldn't be more appropriate, and not just in this country. As even giant corporations and figures of state topple because of credibility and integrity questions, people everywhere are looking for a higher standard, a new, better and more trustworthy kind of leadership. Looking out for number one—and number one alone—may no longer be a viable option.

The professor elaborates, "Competition has given way to coopetition; that's cooperation AND competition." Why? One only has to see "the largest multinational companies collapsing because of greed. Some of them failed because separate accounts meant for the company have been created for leaders. Instead of the shareholders profiting and the company's products' prices going down, only the leaders get rich.

"Value-centered leadership is what this country needs," Macaranas emphasizes. And, yes, there are some good Filipino traits: the traditional camaraderie and support of *bayanihan*; the Filipino sense of empathy; and his pagiging *makatao*, or understanding that a person IS a person with emotions, values, and family, and dealing with him accordingly.

Some of the positive Filipino values can even be found in the Greenleaf list, although Macaranas and the CLSP hold that they have to be contextualized or adapted into the Filipino framework. "If you say a leader must listen, in the Filipino context it also means asking others. Filipinos are very good at processing emotional nuances and undercurrents. We ask each other, 'Did we hear and understand the same thing?' We also need to see the face of the person we are talking to. Transmitting messages through text and phones comes across differently. We have to know the actual context to see if the message is insulting or sincere.

"Take empathy. We empathize even when the other party's in error. Why? *Baka kapit sa patalim na iyong tao* (The person could be desperate). The role of a leader then is to give them an alternative. He should ask, 'Should you empathize with your friend or the community (at all times)?

"Another trait is foresight. Even before college plans were popular, parents sold their carabaos or property to send their kids to school. An OFW sends his first salary for his father's medicine.

"Finally, take a look at contextualization which means understanding the context of the problem. A judgmental person will immediately say this person is a bad person. But Filipinos will ask, 'Why did he do this? Maybe he's kind-hearted but his advisers are corrupt.'"

Macaranas is no stranger to hard-core traditional values. Though his family was comfortably well-off, his father encouraged him and his siblings to earn their keep. As a boy, he earned his *baon* by selling cream puffs during recess time to adults working in a nearby building. As a teenager, he helped out in his father's gas station. As a college student in UP, his band playing paid for his tuition.

He never forgot one of his important childhood lessons. Their maid would occasionally "borrow" a few pesos from the gas station's earnings for the kids' ice cream *merienda*. Many parents would have simply winked at this and looked the other way. But Macaranas' dad severely reprimanded the maid AND the children.

The incident also impressed upon him that true leadership is more of deeds than words. No other factor is as influential, motivational, or discouraging as the leader's example or lack of it.

"That's how Filipinos will adopt this concept," Macaranas says a little confidently. "We are offering them hope that there is something in the Filipino that can help solve our problems. And that it is within their own power to change and transform their own groups, from the corner of a barangay to a corporation."

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AIM professor Federico Macaranas is at the forefront of a management movement to develop value-driven leaders who will put the community's interests before their own

Poetry

Arrival

You, the mother, and I, the son,
Celebrate our birthdays together on a Sunday
Convenient for everyone in the family.
We were born five days and twenty-six years apart.
In the last fifteen years your asthma attacks
And hypertension brought us on constant trips
To hospitals. Attached to tubes you were always
The past year, at the edge of a precipice
Very much like the rickety bus
We rode on atop the Patapat Road
On my first journey to your hometown
In the Cagayan Valley
Atop the Sierra Madre.
I was six
Unknowing of the years you spent away
From this summit of waterfalls and the Big River.
Many more years were to come growing roots
On the welcoming coastal soil
Of Pangasinan. Many later journeys with you
Have shown me
True dimensions of home.
On the fourth day after your 75th
And our final birthday together
You stepped out of bed,
Away from all the tubes
To show me the spot where you and Dad
Would be waiting for a son's arrival.

Herminio S. Beltran, Jr.

The **Sunday Inquirer Magazine** accepts contributions for our regular poetry section. Interested contributors should send a printed copy of the poem (which may be in English or Filipino) together with a self-addressed stamped envelope to Ruel S. De Vera, poetry editor, Sunday Inquirer Magazine, Chino Roces (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner Mascardo and Yague Streets, Makati City 1263, or e-mail to <sim@inquirer.com.ph>

The Fab Four's New Year's Bash

What happens when four of the largest A-list companies decide to throw a joint party? They beat all others; that's what. It would be nothing less than spell binding. One is not sure if there is a Latin origin to the word "mesmerizing", but the joint company celebration which topped off with spectacular fireworks display at Fort Bonifacio would have surely conjured the creation of a new term in the English language. A mass of well-wishers and special guests were surrounding the open field at the Fort's lot as early as eight o'clock while the headlights of the cars could be seen trailing off as far as the eye could see from all directions. If the Romans proudly boasted that "all roads led to Rome," then this was the modern equivalent where more than a 25,000 strong throng headed straight to the Fort to see 2002's grandest New Year's spectacles.

The event was sponsored by sister companies FBDC (Fort Bonifacio Development Corporation), MPC (Metro First Pacific), PLDT and SMART. All stops were pulled to make sure the twenty-five minute display of the most fantastic array of multi-colored fireworks would be mega-spectacular. Despite the surprise heavy downpour that morning that soaked fuses of the fireworks majority still caused major explosions and trails of colored lights by the pyrotechnics that awed one and all. This was heightened by the fact that the flooded generator which was supposed to primer the ignition caps of the sky rockets was revved up only at the 11th hour. Nothing was going to stop the best light show in the country.

The whole atmosphere took on the warm feeling of being among family as group executives brought along their closest kins and "pamangkins" to the event. Spotted were Manny Pangilinan's sisters Milet and Tessie along with their children and friends. The Senior VPs Butch Meilly, Al Panlilio and Ariel Roda were in full attendance as FBDC Senior VP Vic Tinsay bragged about the grand display they had prepared all week. SMART PCMSD Head Boy Martirez stepped out in an all black smart number and met up with Metro Pacific Company's (MPC) Joey Lim and Media Relation's Head David Nugent. The star studded crowd was there in full force waiting to mark that time of the year when the past and the future meet to welcome another great year ahead.

The excitement built up in proportion to the crowd as Italian opera filled the airwaves with Andrea Bocelli's "Nessun Dorma" heightening the anticipation as that minute hand approached the magic moment. By then, the crowd had transformed itself into a river of excited revelers. One could hear the collective hum that was reaching a crescendo as the final moments of the year approached. It was 12 o'clock...

Overseeing the hallmark of New Year's festivities was none other than PLDT chief Manny Pangilinan, who was so busy making sure that guests that evening were enjoying themselves. He was so busy that he almost did not hear the final countdown.

Cheers to 2003! A dazzling display of pyrotechnics lights up Manila at midnight

FBDC SVP Vic Tinsay

"Five .. Four... Three... Two... One... Happy New Year !!!!!!!!! " shrieked the merrymakers as they kissed and pranced with open arms to the music as the fireworks lit-up the midnight sky. The darkness was transformed into a spectacular palette of colors that splattered bright hues as if artists Gus Albor collaborated with Lao Lianbien to create the most beautiful impressionist work in the sky. The spectacle was a mind-blowing artwork.

If feelings of happiness could be quantified, then the sister companies of PLDT, Smart, MPC and FBDC had given each and everyone a full cup to bring home. What a way to welcome '03 with a bang!

PLDT Chief Manny Pangilinan sharing a light moment w/ MTV Managing Director Francis Lumen and MTV Marketing Director Rod Nepomuceno

Metro Pacific's David Nugent w/ timeless beauty Mary Anne Lumen, next to them is Angela Enrile

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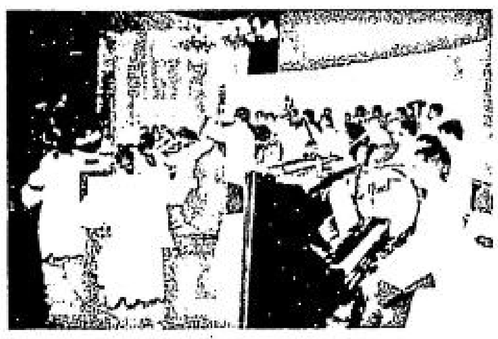
SMART's 3 Kick off 03!

The year turned for the Philippines in three classy strokes as SMART celebrated New Year's with three grand events. Confetti and good cheer rained down North and South as massive and wide reaching as SMART's incomparable network-all part of a momentous buildup to saying hello to 2003.

The Countdown to '03 was set as early as the 30th of December at the Waterfront Hotel Grand Ballroom in Cebu City as the VIP-studded audience was treated to an inspiring concert by the Peace Philharmonic Philippines with Soprano Rachelle Gerdias and Tenor Lemuel dela Cruz. It was a decidedly uplifting performance and set the tone for a thoughtful reflection on the year past and the year to come. And, just to shake the year's blues away and to set the tone for '03, Ballroom Dancing ensued in the true festive Cebu Spirit. Over 500 people were present topbilled by luminaries such as Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmena and family, Mr. Benson Dakay of Shemberg Marketing, Mr. Markus Stern Hon. Consul from Switzerland, and Mr. Ben Dapat, Consul from Denmark.

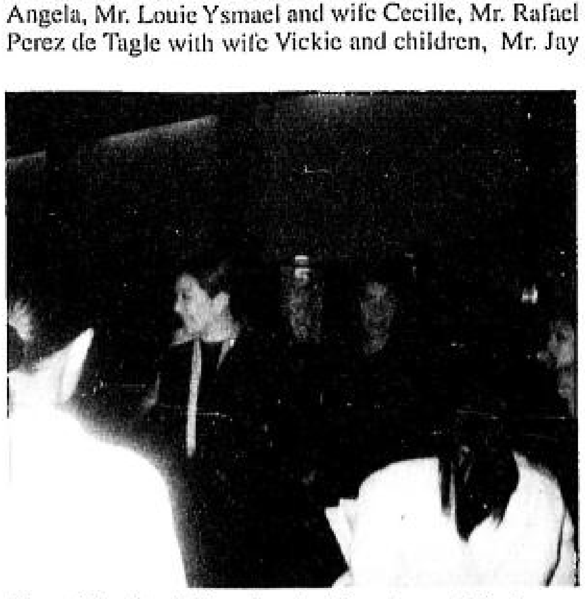


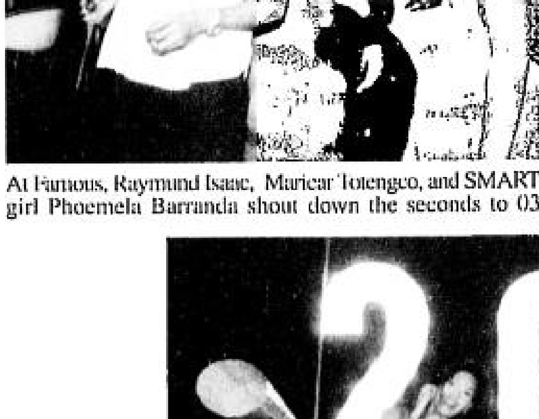
Soprano and tenor power backed by the Peace Philharmonic Philippines at the Cebu Waterfront Hotel

CAP Chairman Atty. Enrique Sobrepena and family countdown the New Year at the CAP-John Hay Trade and Cultural Center, Baguio

Way up North in Baguio the pines were whistling and swaying with twin parties at both the premier Manor Hotel and the CAP-John Hay Trade and Cultural Center, brand new and awe-inspiring. The famous Billy King of Le Souffle lent his masterly expertise to a peerless buffett and after live entertainment filled the halls courtesy of two of the hottest bands from Manila, K.O. Jones and Ntwine. Spotted at the twin affair was Mr. Donnie Tantoco with wife Crickett and children, Pampanga Vice-Governor Mikey Arroyo with wife Angela, Mr. Louie Ysmael and wife Cecille, Mr. Rafael Perez de Tagle with wife Vickie and children, Mr. Jay Sobrepena and Atty. Enrique Sobrepena, Mr. Shean Bedi and Family, Governor Raul Molintas and DOT director Purificacion Molintas. SMART was there with these partying vacationers, watching '02 slip away and '03 peeking in, a simultaneous countdown at both the Manor where fireworks lit up the cool Northern Night and the music flowed through at CAP-John Hay.

Mikee and Angela Arroyo take to the dancefloor at Baguio


Mr. and Mrs. Louie Ysmael make their entrance at Baguio



At Famous, Raymund Isaac, Maricar Totengco, and SMART girl Phoemela Barranda shout down the seconds to 03

Back in good ol' Manila, a different kind of SMART New Year's Countdown was in progress at the Famous Bar at Greenbelt 3. Surprisingly, as the magic few seconds ticked away, there were no fireworks popping and flaring at the ground floor. And no wonder, seems that the people present provided enough pyrotechnics of their own, carousing to an unequalled party atmosphere marshalled by VJs John Herrera and John Hall. SMART subscribers again were the lucky ones, complimentary drinks kept their merry spirits up and kicking. The crowd soon filled Famous to the rafters by 2am in the New '03 and kept it going till 5am.

And the best news is ... SMART will keep things going just as great for the brand new 2003. Watch out for the next latest SMART event to come this year, it promises to be typically SMART, one of a kind, maverick, awesome and fun.

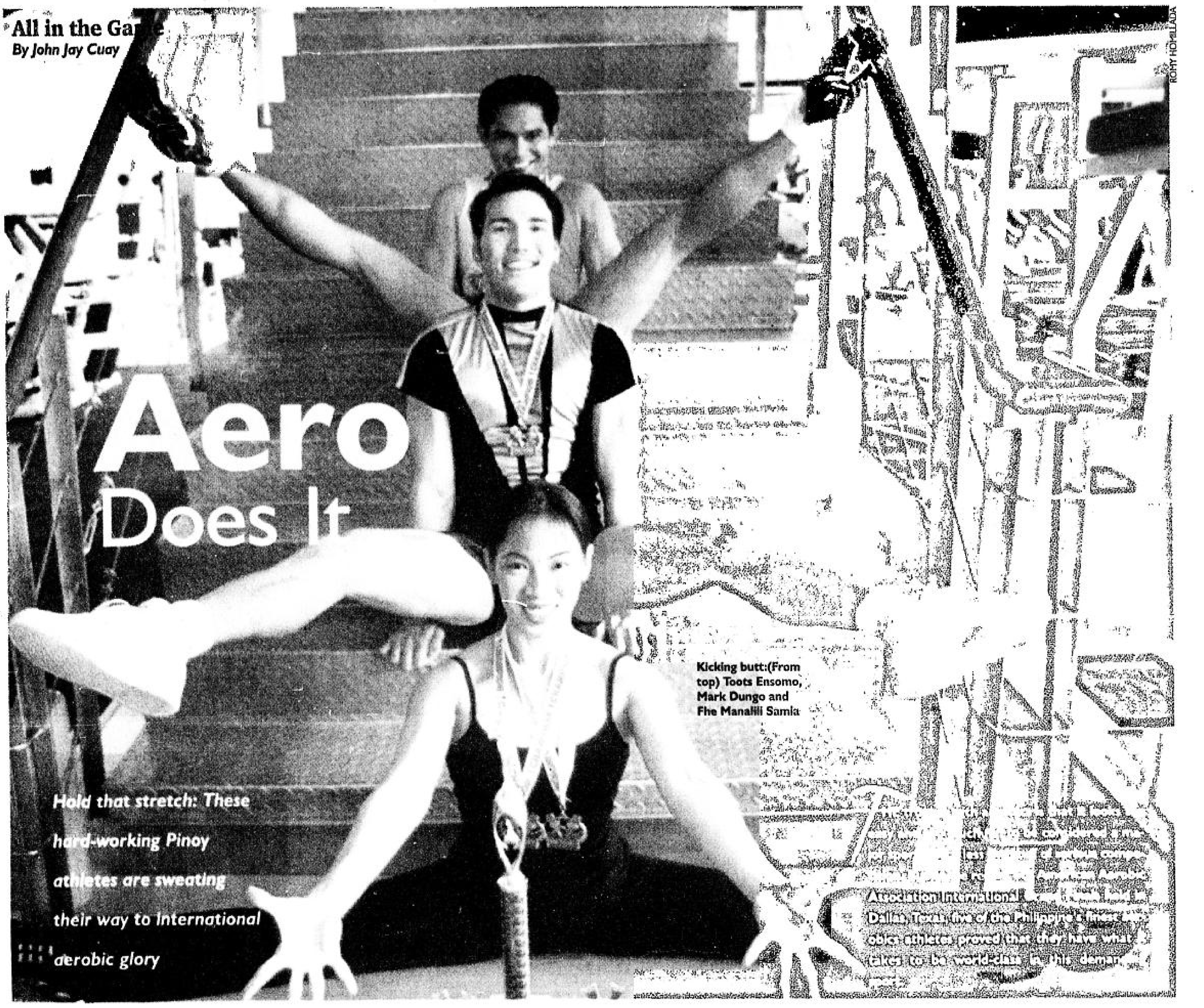
At Famous, Happy New 2003 everybody!

ADVT

All in the Ga e

By John Jay Cuay

Aero Does It



ROMY HOMILLADA

Hold that stretch: These hard-working Pinoy athletes are sweating their way to international aerobic glory

Kicking butt:(From top) Toots Ensomo, Mark Dungo and Fhe Manalili Samia

[illegible] Association International [illegible] Dallas, Texas, five of the Philippine's finest aerobics athletes proved that they have what takes to be world-class in this deman[illegible]

Fhe Manalili Samia, Mark Dungo, Geoffrey Cavilte, Toots Ensomo and Lou Brillantes won several awards in the three main categories of the event: follow the leader in hip-hop, step, and high-low, where they were judged according to their form and correct execution of the aerobics routine. Dungo was also named Mr. Fitness Legacy, a title that makes him an ambassador of fitness in the international scene. The Philippine team won as overall champion.

Ley Fernandez, fitness manager of Gold's Gym, acted as the team's coach during the championship. Fernandez is also the president of the Philippine International Competitive Aerobics Federation (PICAF), which is responsible for sending Filipino athletes in this sport to international competitions.

Here's a closer look at the team:

"Mother Fhe," as she is fondly called by colleagues, is considered a legend in the country's fitness industry. Not only is Fhe Samia an excellent group fitness instructor, her win in Dallas, Texas has also put the Philippines on the map of World Aero Champions. She was a silver medalist in the 1999 Asian Aerobics Competition in Hong Kong, a gold medalist in the 1999 national power-lifting championship and a silver medalist in the 2000 Asian Power-Lifting Championship.

As six-time fitness presenter, Fhe presents new aerobics routines to aero instructors during the annual convention of the Association of Fitness Professionals in the Philippines. This five-time aerobics marathon national champ in the professional category has also been the country's sports aerobics champion in the female division since 1997. Fhe was the overall champion in the Miss Great Bodies 1997 pageant and was first runner up in the Miss Fitness 2000 competition. A group fitness instructor for the past 10 years, she has been certified group fitness leader by Exercise Science Alliance. This member of the Aerobics and Fitness Association of America is also a blackbelter under the Shorin Ryu Karate Federation.

Who would have thought that this woman, who used to be 28 lbs overweight, would achieve all these? Fhe puts it all down to "great will power and determination," a mantra she leaves her students when she goes touring to educate more Filipinos on the sport.

When his name was announced as this year's Mr. Fitness Legacy, Mark Dungo received his award with heart thumping, his nerves on overdrive. Although he was an early favorite, Mark had to hear his name to finally believe that he had bested representatives from other countries. He probably had no reason to doubt it. After all, Mark has won several fitness titles: he was Mr. Great Bodies 2000 and Mr. Boracay Bikini Open 2000, and was first runner up in Mr. Manhunt Philippines 2001.

Considered a guru in the local fitness circle, Mark has done his share to promote health and fitness in the country, efforts that earned him the Fitness Leadership Award in 1991. He didn't stop at that. For two years now, he has been pursuing his dream of putting up fitness areas in the malls, tirelessly making the rounds of government agencies to seek support for the project. A pioneering member of PICAF, Mark is working to get the sports commission's full backing for sports aerobics. While his dream of putting up a gym to train aerobics athletes may remain just that at the moment, Mark also believes that the media can be an indispensable ally in advanc

To page 7

End Page

By John L. Silva

Santi

Santi Bose, raconteur, hedonist and unshaven, won't make it as National Artist. But he will, in many eyes, be the singular artist of our nation

ONE day you get a sex joke from him on your cell. The next day he's gone. Santi Bose decided to take his easel to that big blue canvas up in the sky. Without a goodbye.

There was something in Santi's work that wrung my insides. The first Santi prints I saw were those of Baguio, of the Cathedral and a Pantranco bus tilted downwards negotiating a zig-zag. I grew up in Baguio so these images were nostalgia especially if you were living abroad.

There was also a Carlos Bulosan drawing based on a photograph that became part of our collection. Carlos who? Only the greatest Filipino writer in the United States. He wrote "America Is In The Heart" and had essays published in the New Yorker. But he's all but forgotten on his native shores. That's what drew me to Santi. He was the thinking man's painter.

When we first met Santi in New York, (we're talking late '70s), he raided our Filipiniana photo collection and xeroxed those he would use for his paintings. He was like a kid in a candy store. My partner Jonathan and I saw important historical significance in our photographs. But Santi saw them as potential art works.

A 1905 photo of schoolchildren facing a blackboard with an American teacher pointing at the letters has historical impact. But ove-laid with shaman symbols, fringed with the corporate logos of McDonald's et al. and Santi's whimsy, the photo-image- turned-painting becomes a pause for meditating on the screwed up situation we're in.

Political messages and tracts from my leftist friends are terribly boring, clichéd, hackneyed and stultifying. They've effectively lost the propaganda war. Santi, partisan for nobody, saw the shit outside and found a visual non-pedantic course of presenting our national foibles.

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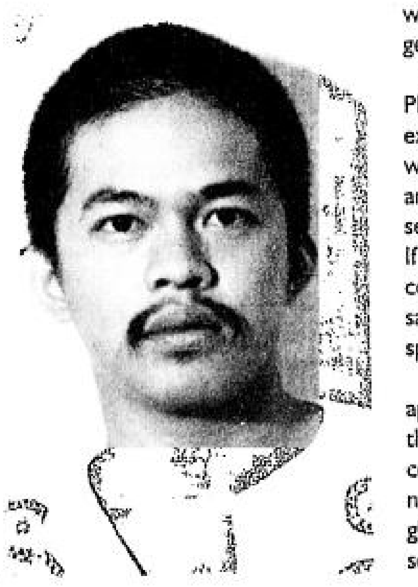

The "thinking man's painter" in a very early picture

We have a Santi painting of two men playing pool. It seems like any ordinary scene but look at it long enough and you start fitting in the pieces. The canvas is actually one side of a fruit packing crate. The ball they are shooting at is an American dime. And if you were savvy enough, you'd recognize the painting's origin from a 1930s photograph of two Filipino farm workers on a Saturday night, dressed up in zoot suits, playing pool in Stockton, California. Instead of the thousands of photographs of grape farm workers with clenched fists on a strike, Santi chose this more intimate scene of [illegible] men bond[illegible] [illegible] a week [illegible]ing stoo[illegible] [illegible] says just [illegible] much about the [illegible],000 OFWs who worked the fields of California three generations ago.

Santi tackled Spanish colonialism, the Philippine American war, racism, tribal extinction, nationalism, revolutionary wars, colonial hygiene, sexual politics and many other subjects that the Left seems so unable to describe and depict. If we had a hundred more Santis, this country would be hopping. And thousands more thoughtful, incisive, and inspiring paintings.

Santi's work has been described as appreciated only abroad. People say that of several other Filipino artists. Au contraire. It's actually a case of Filipinos not knowing their history so their eyes glaze over when a Santi Fil-Am war scene is in front of them.

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I'll remember that most of Santi. He was always coming up with new strange depictions of some historical moment and I'd be, in my ossified years, like some prude nervously clutching at the hem. He'd laugh and laugh, congratulating himself with such a subversive thought, and was off to his canvas. The finished product was usually a radical masterpiece.

National Artists are sadly stereotyped in our country. They're suppose to look patrician and affect a courtly pose when recognized in public functions. Santi, raconteur, hedonist, and unshaven, won't make it. But he will, in many eyes, be the singular artist of our nation.

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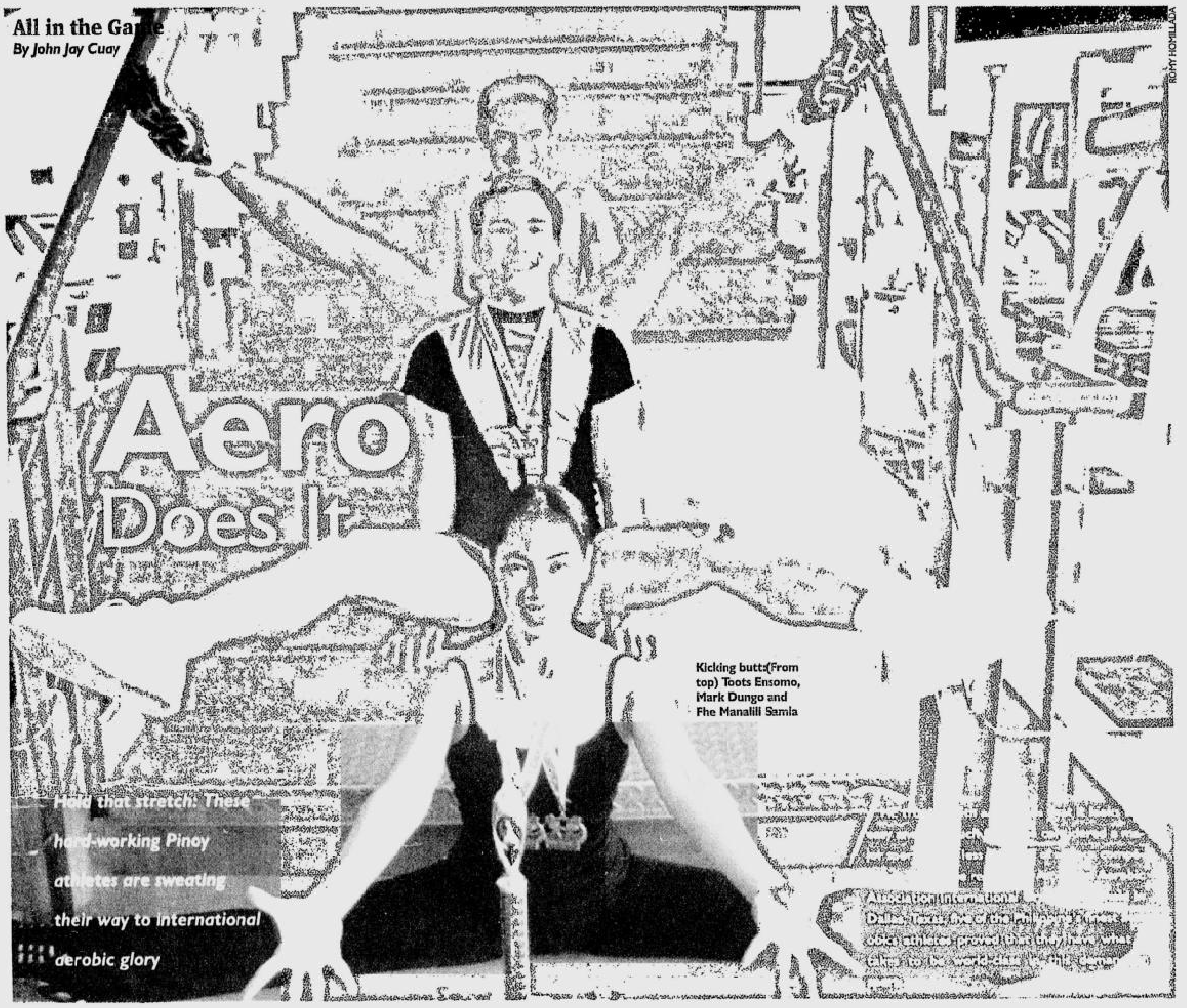
All in the Game

By John Jay Cuay



Aero Does It

Hold that stretch: These hard-working Pinoy athletes are sweating their way to international aerobic glory

Kicking butt:(From top) Toots Ensomo, Mark Dungo and Fhe Manalili Samia

Association Internationale [illegible] Dallas, Texas, five of the Philippines's [illegible] obics athletes proved that they have what [illegible] takes to be world-class [illegible]

Fhe Manalili Samia, Mark Dungo, Geoffrey Cavilte, Toots Ensomo and Lou Brillantes won several awards in the three main categories of the event: follow the leader in hip-hop, step, and high-low, where they were judged according to their form and correct execution of the aerobics routine. Dungo was also named Mr. Fitness Legacy, a title that makes him an ambassador of fitness in the international scene. The Philippine team won as overall champion.

Ley Fernandez, fitness manager of Gold's Gym, acted as the team's coach during the championship. Fernandez is also the president of the Philippine International Competitive Aerobics Federation (PICAF), which is responsible for sending Filipino athletes in this sport to international competitions.

Here's a closer look at the team:

"Mother Fhe," as she is fondly called by colleagues, is considered a legend in the country's fitness industry. Not only is Fhe Samia an excellent group fitness instructor, her win in Dallas, Texas has also put the Philippines on the map of World Aero Champions. She was a silver medalist in the 1999 Asian Aerobics Competition in Hong Kong, a gold medalist in the 1999 national power-lifting championship and a silver medalist in the 2000 Asian Power-Lifting Championship.

As six-time fitness presenter, Fhe presents new aerobics routines to aero instructors during the annual convention of the Association of Fitness Professionals in the Philippines. This five-time aerobics marathon national champ in the professional category has also been the country's sports aerobics champion in the female division since 1997. Fhe was the overall champion in the Miss Great Bodies 1997 pageant and was first runner up in the Miss Fitness 2000 competition. A group fitness instructor for the past 10 years, she has been certified group fitness leader by Exercise Science Alliance. This member of the Aerobics and Fitness Association of America is also a blackbelter under the Shorin Ryu Karate Federation.

Who would have thought that this woman, who used to be 28 lbs overweight, would achieve all these? Fhe puts it all down to "great will power and determination," a mantra she leaves her students when she goes touring to educate more Filipinos on the sport.

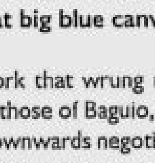
When his name was announced as this year's Mr. Fitness Legacy, Mark Dungo received his award with heart thumping, his nerves on overdrive. Although he was an early favorite, Mark had to hear his name to finally believe that he had bested representatives from other countries. He probably had no reason to doubt it. After all, Mark has won several fitness titles: he was Mr. Great Bodies 2000 and Mr. Boracay Bikini Open 2000, and was first runner up in Mr. Manhunt Philippines 2001.

Considered a guru in the local fitness circle, Mark has done his share to promote health and fitness in the country, efforts that earned him the Fitness Leadership Award in 1991. He didn't stop at that. For two years now, he has been pursuing his dream of putting up fitness areas in the malls, tirelessly making the rounds of government agencies to seek support for the project. A pioneering member of PICAF, Mark is working to get the sports commission's full backing for sports aerobics. While his dream of putting up a gym to train aerobics athletes may remain just that at the moment, Mark also believes that the media can be an indispensable ally in advanc

To page 7

End Page

By John L. Silva



Santi

Santi Bose, raconteur, hedonist and unshaven, won't make it as National Artist. But he will, in many eyes, be the singular artist of our nation

ONE day you get a sex joke from him on your cell. The next day he's gone. Santi Bose decided to take his easel to that big blue canvas up in the sky. Without a goodbye.

There was something in Santi's work that wrung my insides. The first Santi prints I saw were those of Baguio, of the Cathedral and a Pantranco bus tilted downwards negotiating a zig-zag. I grew up in Baguio so these images were nostalgia especially if you were living abroad.

There was also a Carlos Bulosan drawing based on a photograph that became part of our collection. Carlos who? Only the greatest Filipino writer in the United States. He wrote "America Is In The Heart" and had essays published in the New Yorker. But he's all but forgotten on his native shores. That's what drew me to Santi. He was the thinking man's painter.

When we first met Santi in New York, (we're talking late '70s), he raided our Filipiniana photo collection and xeroxed those he would use for his paintings. He was like a kid in a candy store. My partner Jonathan and I saw important historical significance in our photographs. But Santi saw them as potential art works.

A 1905 photo of schoolchildren facing a blackboard with an American teacher pointing at the letters has historical impact. But ove laid with shaman symbols, fringed with the corporate logos of McDonald's et al. and Santi's whimsy, the photo-image- turned-painting becomes a pause for meditating on the screwed up situation we're in.

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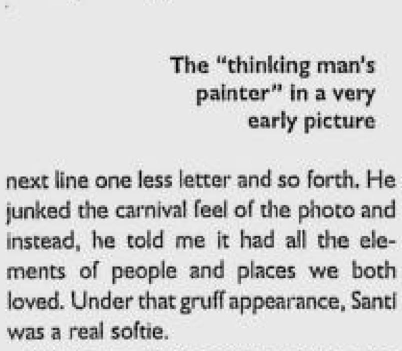

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This Week

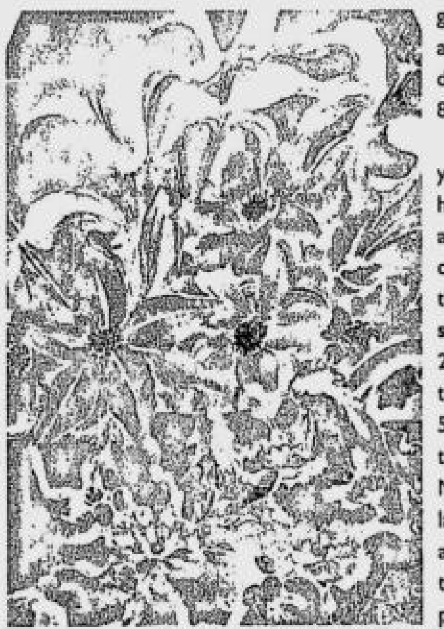
Art

The winning and participating entries in the **PAP Open Fine Print Competition 2002** are on view at the 2nd and 3rd floor of the CCP Hallway, CCP Complex, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City until Jan. 14. For details, call 890-6984.

Calendar, a group exhibit by Andres Barrioquinto, Butch Payawal, Henri Cainglet, Dr. Joel C. Mendez, Jemina, Kiko Escora, E.J. Cabangon, Raul Lebajo, Ferdinand Montemayor, Olan Ventura, Pedro Garcia, Ronald Ventura and Wesley Valenzuela, opens Jan. 6 at the Big & Small Art Co., SM Megamall A and will run until Jan. 15.

After the Flowers, an exhibit of still life paintings by Valeria Cavestany, from Jan. 9 to Feb. 16 at the Tivoli Restaurant of Mahdarin Oriental, Manila. For details, call 750-8888 ext. 2220.

The Other, first solo exhibit by Benjamin Dayrit Elayda III, opens Jan. 9 at the Big & Small Art Co., SM Megamall A and will run until Jan. 20.



"Red, Blue and Yellow" by Valeria Cavestany, on exhibit at Mandarin Oriental's The Tivoli

Atbp

Caterers, restaurateurs and those planning to start a catering business are invited to join the ProActive Center for Training's **Managing a Catering Business seminar-workshop** on Jan. 6-15, 2-6 p.m. at Bedas Restaurant, C-5, Libis, Quezon City. For reservations, call 787-6370.

Photoworld Manila 2003 will feature a trade show of the latest photo equipment and technology and a series of photo workshops featuring local and foreign master photographers. The three-day series of photo workshops at the Asian Institute of Management will be from Jan. 18-20. Beginners and professionals are invited to attend. For details, call 843-5341 or 813-7420.

Learn how to assemble your own PC, configure hardware, install software and troubleshoot basic computer problems through a **Computer Assembly Workshop** on Jan. 26 (and every last Sunday of the month), from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Isis International-Manila Office, 3 Marunong St., Teacher's Village Ext. (near QC City Hall and Philippine Heart Center). Fee inclusive of CD package, certificate and lunch. For reservations, call 417-1521 or 0919-740-5199 (Marga).

Cinema

Alliance Francaise de Manille presents *La Fille de D'Artagnan* on Jan. 8, 8 p.m. at Alliance Ondeo Auditorium. Set in the south of France, Eloise (Sophie Marceau) uncovers a plot to assassinate Louis XIV. She hurries to Paris to call on her father, D'Artagnan, for help. She manages to coax him out of his retirement and together they recruit the three other musketeers, Porthos, Aramis and Athos. For details, call 895-7585.

pelikula@titusbrandsma will feature "Swept Away" by Lina Wertmuller, "The Importance of Being Earnest" by Anthony Asquith and "Manhunter" by Michael Man on Jan. 11, 1 p.m. at Titus Brandsma Center, 24 Acacia St., Cubao, QC. For details, call 726-7763 or 839-7351.

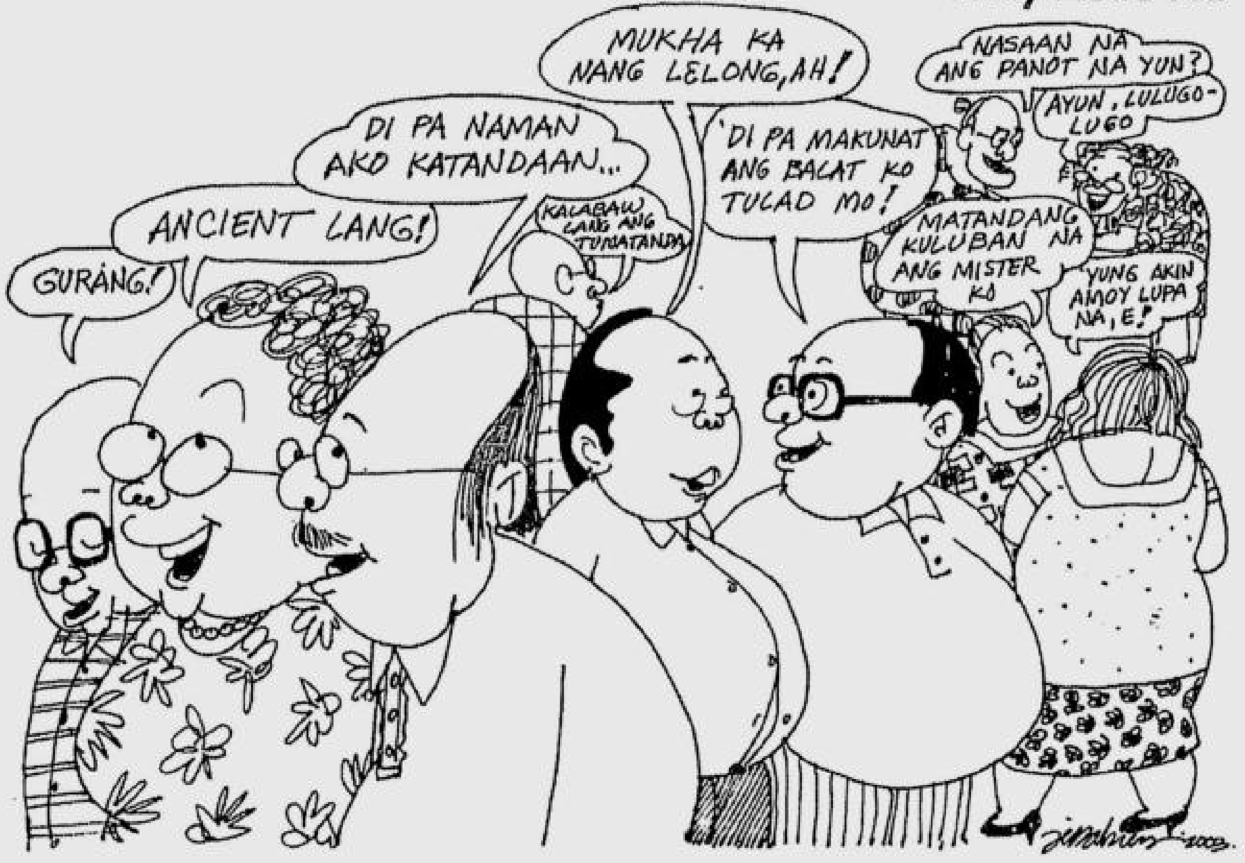
X-manila

The Sinulog celebration promises to be a lot more exciting as the Dept. of Tourism brings in a select group from the Arizona Ballroom Company on Jan. 18, 8 p.m. at the Visayas Ballroom of the Cebu Plaza Hotel dubbed **Ballroom Dancing Cebu, More Than the Usual Dance Steps**. Ballroom enthusiasts from different countries in Asia have also been invited to join the event. During the International Fellowship Night, the Arizona Ballroom Company will be presenting 27 dances. The opening number, a modern ballet, will be presented by Meghan Javier Samonte of Ballet Academy of Cebu. For details, call 0917-9625664 or visit the official website at www.ballroomdancingcebu.com.

Pinoy Nga!

By Jess Abrera

May Edad Na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ANCIENT LANG!
DI PA NAMAN AKO KATANDAAN...
KALABAW LANG ANG TUMATANDA
MUKHA KA NANG LELONG, AH!
'DI PA MAKUNAT ANG BALAT KO TULAD MO!
NASAAN NA ANG PANOT NA YUN?
AYUN, LULUGO-LUGO
MATANDANG KULUBAN NA ANG MISTER KO
YUNG AKIN AMOY LUPA NA, E!

Aero

...from page 6

ng the Filipinos' awareness of health and fitness.

Geoffrey Cavilte, 28, may be considered an amateur in the international aerobics scene, but he's not exactly a newcomer in local fitness competitions. This first runner up in Slimmers World's Great Bodies 2001 fitness competition also ranks first in National Aerobics Sports, class B (professional without international experience). Geoff stuck to rigid mental and physical training to get where he is, staying focused on enhancing his cardiovascular endurance and perfecting his one-arm push-ups, jumps, split landings and other gymnastics-inspired moves that make up his routine.

A former business management student, Geoff never thought he'd become an aerobics athlete. He had been working out in a local gym to keep his best friend company when he realized how much progress he was making. Taking his workout one level higher, he decided to become a body builder and went for the 1999 Mr. Great Bodies title. Although he says he didn't quite do well on his first attempt, it did open new windows for him. While presenting his aerobics routine in the talent portion of the pageant, Geoff caught the attention of two sports aerobics athletes who saw his potential in the sport. Today, Geoff is considered one of the best sports aerobics athlete in the Philippines, thanks, he says, to his patience and perseverance.

Toots Ensomo, a 32-year-old Bulakeño, started it all. The pioneering member of the Philippine sports aerobics team first competed internationally in 1994, when he ranked 16th among 46 competitors in the World Aerobics Championship in Las Vegas. In 1997,Toots ranked fourth during the international "step challenge marathon" in Australia. He also won a silver in the 2001 Asian Sports Aerobic Competition. Toots' recent awards in the Dallas competition cap six months of training that saw him working out five hours a day, perfecting his flexibility, endurance and strength to achieve fluidity in his aerobics routine.

His family background might have helped as well. The youngest of six children, all of them dancers, Toots was a member of the Octo Arts Dancers from 1990 to 1997. Those were his most active years, he recalls, when he taught group fitness exercises. An active member of his community and considered one of his town's achievers, Toots currently manages the Step Fitness Center in San Jose, Bulacan.

His advice to future sports aerobics athletes? "Start young and stay focused." His advice to the government? Give more support to this serious sport, please! Q

The Word

By Fr. Ruben J. Villote

The Spirit of a Recent Christmas Past

This is CMY's way of reaching out to the anonymous donors who responded to its call to minister to the city's poor during the holiday season

A GOOD number of The Word readers responded to my Advent invitation for them to join my ministry—and that of our CMY communities—to reach out to street *kariton* families and solitary vagrants, both children and youths, last December 22. Many of the readers responded anonymously which means that I might not be able to reach them anymore.

So here are some images of our *Pasko Para sa* Poor (PPP) to allow them to enter into the spirit of that recent Christmas Past which has made both receivers and givers one happy Filipino Christian family beyond the perimeters of the official Fourth World Meeting of Families on January 22-26.

My two new books, "My Crazy Dream" and "Idol," are introduced in this column, my 2003 gift to readers. Check them out at Claretian Publications, 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City (tel. 921-3984); Pauline Bookstore, in front of UST, España, Manila and at the Center for Migrant Youth, 103 Cordillera St., SMH, Quezon City (tel. 732-8268, ask for Joe or Buboy). Q

Fr. Ben (in baseball cap) among some of the *kariton* families during the *Pasko Para sa* Poor gathering

MY CRAZY DREAM

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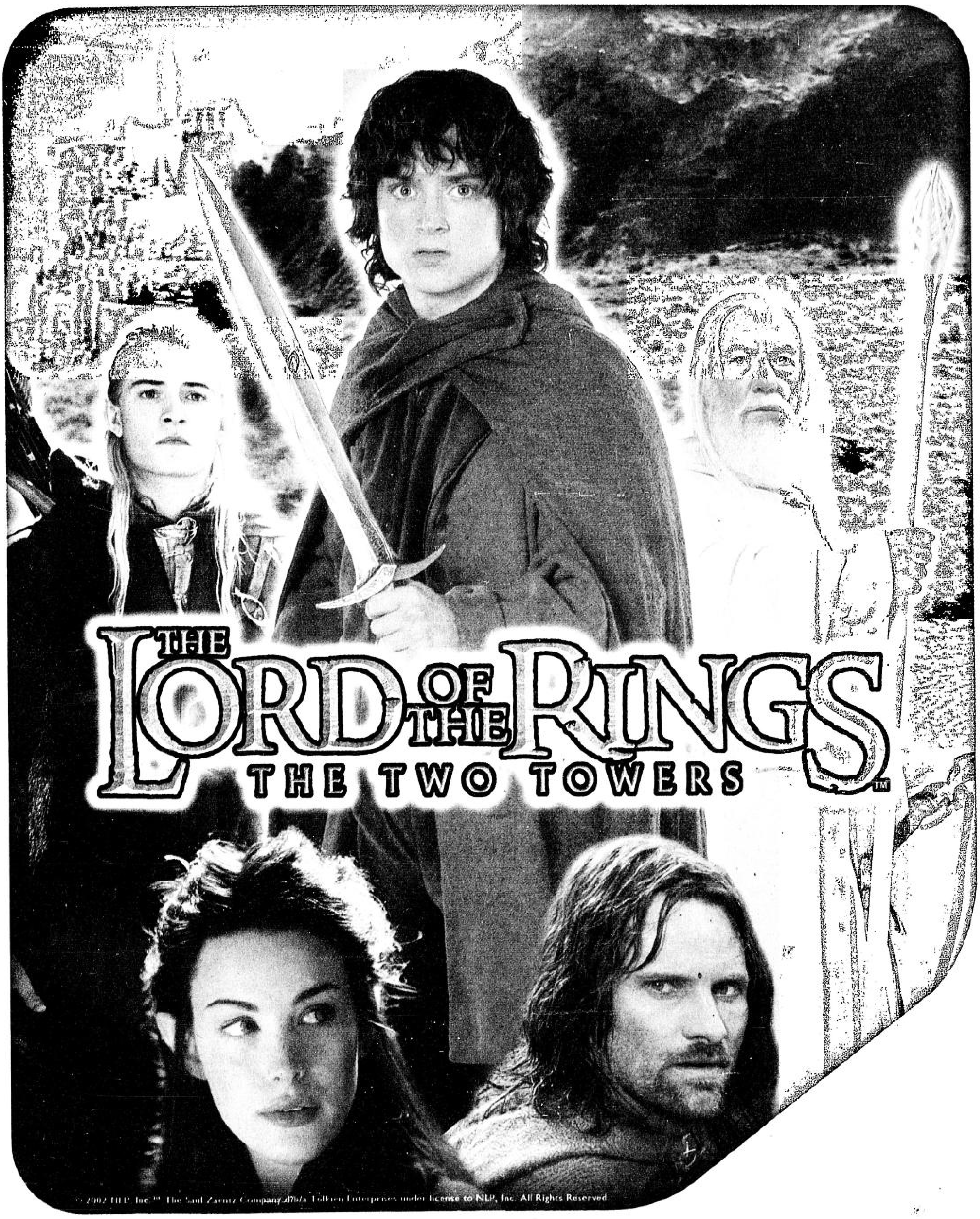
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THE TWO TOWERS™

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